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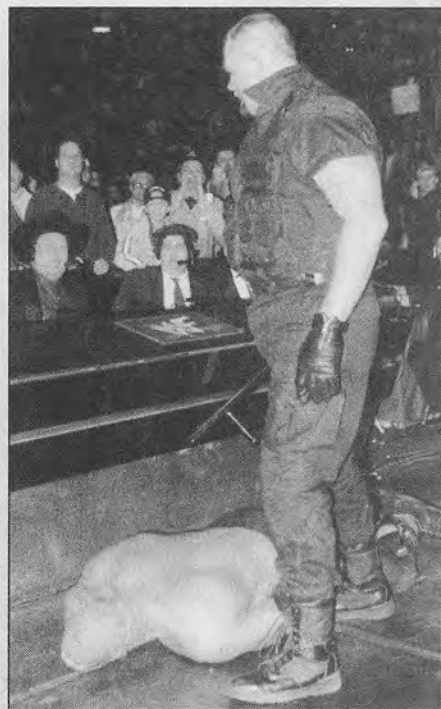
W Inside Wrestling

THE MAGAZINE
THAT RIPS THE LID
OFF PRO WRESTLING

APRIL 1999

DEPARTMENTS

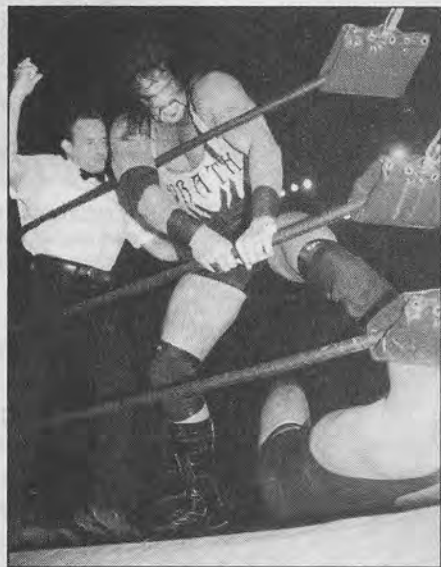
- 4 **SINCERELY YOURS**
- 6 **REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK** *by Stu Saks*
- 8 **NAMES MAKIN' NEWS** *by Bill Apter*
- 10 **ON THE ROAD** *with Dave Lenker*
- 12 **BEHIND THE DRESSING ROOM DOOR** *by Dave Rosenbaum*
- 14 **THE INSIDER** *by Brandi Mankiewicz*
- 16 **ON ASSIGNMENT** *by Liz Hunter*
- 18 **CAPSULE PROFILE #278: SCOTT HALL**
- 20 **WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**
- 22 **NEWS FROM THE WRESTLING CAPITALS**
- 24 **MATT BROCK'S PLAIN SPEAKING**
- 68 **ONE ON ONE: SHAWN MICHAELS VS. X-PAC**
- 80 **INSIDE WRESTLING CLASSIC** (April 1979)
- 84 **OFFICIAL WRESTLING RATINGS**
- 85 **INSIDE WRESTLING ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS**
- 86 **BLAST FROM THE PAST**



PAGE 48

FEATURES

- 26 **THE 1999 INSIDE WRESTLING COMPUTER TOURNAMENT**
Sixteen of the world's best wrestlers have been brought together—for computer combat. Their strengths and weaknesses have been fed into our special program, and we present to you the results here
- 48 **BIG BOSSMAN:**
VINNIE MAC SAVED HIS CAREER ...BUT RUINED HIS LIFE!
Will he be forever indebted to the WWF owner?
- 52 **A STEINER-BISCHOFF CONSPIRACY?**
HOW BIG POPPA PUMP BECAME NWO HOLLYWOOD'S MAIN MAN!
We heard he had been eying that leadership position for months
- 56 **MEANIE MANIA!**
Soon it could be sweeping the nation!
- 60 **HOLLYWOOD HOGAN:**
"YOU'LL BELIEVE ME WHEN I'M SITTING IN THE WHITE HOUSE!"
This was a very insightful "Hotseat" interview
- 64 **OVERLOOK THIS MAN ...**
AND FEEL HIS WRATH!
The former Adam Bomb has been impressive lately



PAGE 64

Next issue on sale
March 16, 1999

Sincerely Yours

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The Undertaker's looks are described as "mysterious" and "awesome" by reader Cindy Zable; it's doubtful Steve Austin and Kane would use those same words.

MYSTERY MAN

I started watching wrestling again about six months ago, and the reason I did was because I caught a glimpse of The Undertaker. The mysterious look of this man is awesome. No one can measure up to him (except maybe Kane and "Stone-Cold").

CINDY ZABLE
Lake Mills, IA

G-C-W! G-C-W!

I am a big wrestling fan who lives in Florida, but WCW and the WWF rarely come to Panama City, if ever at all. So I found a replacement for WCW and the WWF. It's called Gulf Coast Wrestling, and it's just as good.

There are many ex-WWF and WCW wrestlers, exciting stars such as Chief Little Bear and Jesse Dalton, and great youngsters like "Real Deal" Johnny Reno (who is good enough to be in any federation) and "Hardcore" Hal Magnus.

If you live in Panama City, or anywhere in Florida, Gulf Coast Wrestling is definitely worth checking out.

RYAN HOLLAND
Youngstown, FL

WELL, PARDON US ...

I just finished reading your "1998 Turnbuckle Turkey Awards" (Holiday 1998), and I am disgusted that you would even consider presenting Sting with one of those pompous prizes. Sting is the greatest wrestler to ever grace WCW or any other wrestling organization. He is practically the Rock of Gibraltar and deserves the utmost respect for the ground he has broken in professional wrestling. This guy has been in top matches, main events, and has held the WCW World title five times.

Just because Sting chose to join NWO Wolfpac doesn't make him a different wrestler than the one everyone's been praising for all these years. If it makes that big of a difference to everyone, then they should not have the privilege of calling themselves loyal fans of the "Stinger." I find it absolutely repulsive that you can be so judgmental of Sting when he has done so much for wrestling.

Sting is the franchise of WCW. I am so sick of hearing everyone dissing him for career moves. I, for one, am happy to see this enigmatic champion in the Wolfpac



Former WCW tag team champs Sting and The Giant are now enemies, but they are both still competing under the NWO banner. Candace Legg says true fans will support Sting no matter what side he fights on.

and proceeded to talk the audience to death, proving that he still has the most powerful set of lungs in wrestling. His long-winded speech made me wish I had one of those universal translator gadgets you see in the *Star Trek* movies. He still hasn't stopped talking.

Don't get me wrong—anyone who comes on the scene and offers to beat up Hogan has my support, but The Warrior bores me with his incessant babbling and grandiose entrances. Bill Goldberg has flashy entrances, but he follows them

and think all of those who are not should take a deep breath and get over it. This was his career choice, not ours. So get off his back! If you cannot be happy for Sting, then just leave him alone.

CANDACE LEGG
Douglasville, GA

HOGAN FOR PREZ

Hogan for President! What a rush! I will campaign for him if he changes his ways. If he could treat fans better, he'd make a great President.

Just think, we might be able to get rid of football and have nothing but wrestling all weekend. Hogan for President! He's got my vote.

JOHN HENLEY
Lexington, SC

HELLO ... GOODBYE

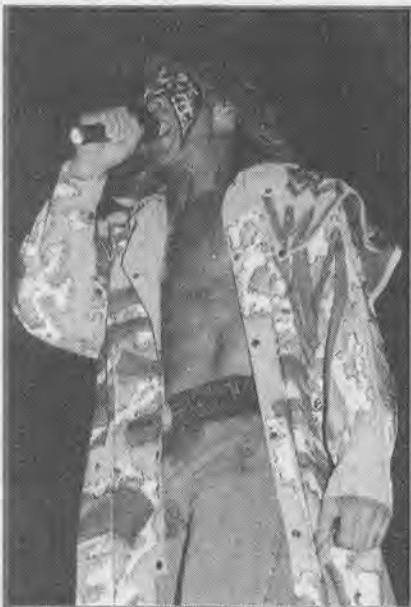
The Warrior has returned! To elaborate on this monumental event, I'll paraphrase DX by saying two words: big deal! Okay, so that's not what they'd say, but you get the picture.

The "Ultimate Windbag" made his grand entrance into WCW on a broadcast of *Nitro* a while back

up with hellacious beatings, not 15-minute tongue workouts.

And since Warrior couldn't even beat Hogan, he will never reclaim his status as the ultimate Hogan thumper. Once again, The Warrior has disappeared. Once again,

(Continued on page 70)



"Yadda, yadda, yadda ..." Exactly what did The Warrior say in the brief time he spent in WCW? Reader David Miller doesn't know, and judging by the content of his letter, he doesn't care.

Inside Wrestling

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EDITOR-IN-CHIEF David Lenker
SENIOR EDITOR Bill Apter
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ASSOCIATE EDITOR Frank Krewda
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David Rosenbaum
CONTRIBUTING WRITERS Matt Brock
Elizabeth A. Hunter

Vice President/Marketing

David Gerhardt

Executive Vice President/Circulation

Kenneth J. Gudaitis

Circulation Director

Robert Nucci

Advertising Director

Sharon Liggio

(215) 643-6385

Customer Service

London Publishing Co.

P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9

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REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

By Stu Saks

If Rupert Murdoch is, as the scuttlebutt says, actually considering putting wrestling on his Fox Network, maybe the December 5-11 edition of *TV Guide* could help him with his decision. Murdoch, who also owns the venerable magazine, had to be blown away with the sales of that issue.

That week's *TV Guide* featured four different signature covers, featuring four different pro wrestling stars: Steve Austin, Bill Goldberg, The Undertaker, and Hollywood Hogan. The story inside the magazine, written by Bruce Newman, focused on the phenomenal business the sport is doing. It also contained sidebar stories written by Mark Lasswell on each cover subject, Jesse Ventura, and another called "5 Reasons To Love Wrestling."

According to Ari Karpeo, *TV Guide's* director of media relations, the issue's newsstand sales percentage was exceeded in recent years only by the issue printed after the death of Princess Diana. The wrestling issue sold 65 percent of the copies distributed to newsstands, compared to a normal issue, which, Karpeo said, usually averages about 50 percent.

In the magazine business, issues that sell 65 percent come along about as often as baseball players hitting .400. Murdoch spent a ton of money on his Los Angeles Dodgers during baseball's off-season, and it's highly unlikely he was able to find a hitter that will come even close to that magical .400 batting average. Still, one of Murdoch's goals is to position his team to challenge the one owned by his long-time business rival, Ted Turner, whose Braves are once again the National League's best team.

Turner, of course, is also the largest stockholder in Time Warner, which also owns World Championship Wrestling. It all gets a little complicated, this world of big business and high finance, but for our purposes it can all be simplified rather easily if we consider these facts. Wrestling is red-hot. Murdoch owns the Fox Network and Fox Sports Net. Murdoch hates Turner and would like nothing more than to help himself and hurt Ted at the same time.

Vince McMahon? I'm not quite sure where he fits in. Maybe early in 1998, when he was cash-strapped, he might have sought Murdoch's help. That's obviously no longer the case. He might still crave a prime-time spot on the Fox Network, which has about 28 million more potential viewers than the USA Network.

But right now, Murdoch shouldn't be looking at someone else's product. The timing is perfect for the start-up of a third big-bucks national wrestling company. If Murdoch's not at least considering it, he'd be wise to take a close look at his own magazine's sale figures.

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NAMES MA

THE NATIONAL WRESTLING Alliance has launched a women's division headed by **Tor Berg**, the former owner of the Ladies Professional Wrestling Association (LPWA). NWA President **Howard Brody** has already appointed former LPWA broadcaster **Ken Resnick** as president and former AWA World champ and WCW Commissioner **Nick Bockwinkel** as commissioner of the new organization, which will be called the WNW.

"We believe in tradition, and women's wrestling was always a large part of NWA history, so we're going to bring it back to the forefront once again," said Brody. "We're negotiating with **Madusa Miceli**, **Wendi Richter**, **Bambi**, and a lot of



MADUSA MICELI

talent from Mexico and Japan. I think women's wrestling could really take off again, and I'm very excited to be involved in this project."

Brady Boone, who wrestled for the NWA and the WWF and most recently refereed for WCW, was

killed in an automobile accident in Tampa, Florida, on December 14. Our sympathies go out to his family ... **Brian Christopher** and **Shawn Stasiak** have formed a team in Memphis' Power Pro Wrestling, and **Scott Taylor**, Christopher's regular partner in the WWF, says he's puzzled by the move. "I mean, I'm available for the Memphis dates," he



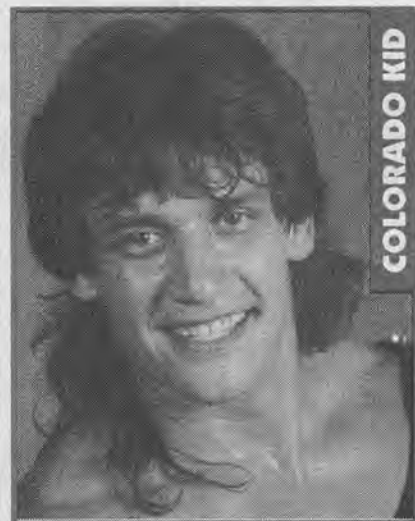
STING

said. "I don't know why Brian's doing this."

Said Christopher: "I've got some personal issues I have to get settled down here in Memphis, and I don't want Scott getting involved in them."

Look for **Sting** in a TNT movie called *Shutter Speed* soon. He'll be portraying a policeman ... **Sable** has recently signed a deal to do a photo spread in *Playboy* ... **Samu** has signed to be in an upcoming **Adam Sandler** movie (no title yet) ... **Hollywood Hogan** will be one of the stars of the new Muppet movie ... A Virginia-based company called America Remembers is marketing WCW postage stamps.

NWA North American champion **Colorado Kid** will soon be leaving



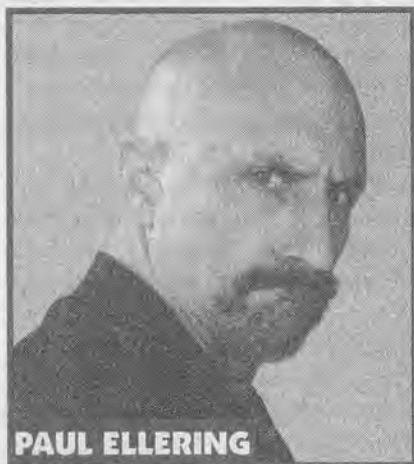
COLORADO KID

the confines of Music City Wrestling to travel to Texas to battle **Kit Carson**. Then, a few days later, he'll head to Florida to wrestle veteran **Greg Valentine**. "I'm really sick and tired of hearing people criticize me for being afraid of wrestling outside of Music City," Colorado said. "I'm not afraid at all. If my schedule permits, I'd like to travel to every NWA promotion in the United States in 1999."

Boogie Woogie Brown will be on the sidelines for several months after having surgery performed on his left knee ... **Blade Boudreaux** added a second title to his collection when he won the CWA heavyweight championship from **Lance Jade**. Boudreaux also holds the AWF heavyweight belt ... **Mr. Hughes** says he intends to change the direction of his career this year. "I've lost over 100 pounds already," he said, "but I haven't lost any of my toughness. What you're going to see is a quicker, more agile Mr. Hughes" ... **Lou Andrews** has beaten "**Bruiser**" **Brian Cox** for the Pacific Coast Wrestling heavyweight title.

KIN' NEWS

By Bill Apter



PAUL ELLERING

Paul Ellering officially split with **The Disciples of Apocalypse** after his interference backfired and caused them to lose a match to **The New Age Outlaws**. Actually, the split wasn't his idea. **Skull** and **Eight-Ball** attacked him after the match. His next move? He isn't sure. "There are still a lot of wrestlers in the WWF who need some guidance and need a master strategist to show them the right way," he said. "I've got some connections with some people around here, some people I've known for a while."

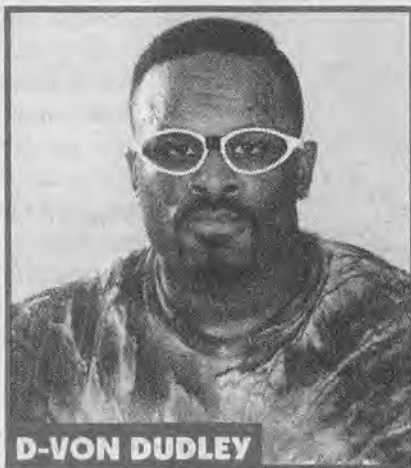
Sounds like he might be talking about a reunion with **The Legion of Doom**, **Hawk** and **Animal**. By the way, those two are back on speaking terms again. **Animal** has clearly taken **Hawk's** side in his dispute with **Darren Drozdov**. "No matter what problems we have, **Hawk** is my blood brother," **Animal** said. "If he has a problem with **Droz**, then so do I."

Japan's Frontier Martial Arts Wrestling honored the original **Sheik** on a recent card, dubbing it **Sheik's** official retirement ceremony. The veteran, who walks slowly due to knee problems, wore a suit to the ring, but he made sure to attack a few photographers and kick a few

chairs on his way.

Yokozuna has signed for several matches in Missouri's World Legion Wrestling ... **"Mean" Marc Ash** and **Craig Pittman** are feuding with **Lex Reed** and **Scotty McKeever** in ICW ... A new **Lord Humongous** has popped up in Music City Wrestling; he's being managed by **Bert "Honey Love" Prentice** ... **Reckless Youth** is negotiating with both ECW and California's All-Pro Wrestling ... Congratulations to **Glen Osbourne** on his recent marriage to his fiancée, **Erika**.

D-Von Dudley says he recently had a reunion with the man he says



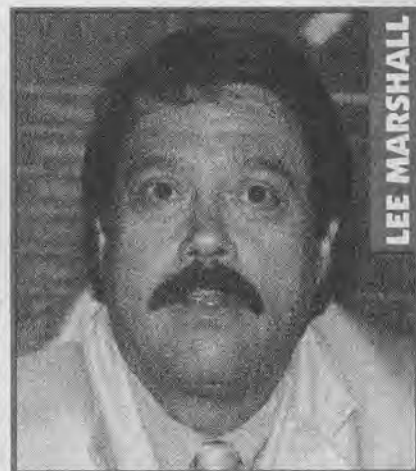
D-VON DUDLEY

"taught me everything I know," veteran **Johnny Rodz**. "Hey, I'm really proud of how far **D-Von** has come along," **Rodz**, who still competes on cards in New York, said. "I taught him about hardcore wrestling long before most people knew what the word hardcore meant."

Pennsylvania Championship Wrestling manager **Patricia Steinman** says both she and the man she manages, PCW Commonwealth champion **Chris Krueger**, are sick and tired of hearing fans chant, "Mo-ni-ca! Mo-ni-ca!" whenever she

approaches the ring (she actually does bear a striking resemblance to **Monica Lewinsky**). "It irritates us to no end," she says. "We are so distracted by that chant. I mean, **Chris** almost lost his belt to that loser **Tommy Golden** because of it!" ... **Flash Flanagan** is close to signing a long-term deal with PCW ... **Robert Gibson** has signed for several ECW matches.

WCW broadcaster **Lee Marshall** has left the promotion simply because all the travel wore him out. "Money was never an issue," **Marshall** said. "It's just that I live in Malibu, California, and making the trips to all the pay-per-views, the weekly **Nitros** and **Thunder** broadcasts, and other promotional duties was just too much. The production company I own near my home was suffering because of my trips as well. I want to thank all the wonderful fans and also the great



LEE MARSHALL

crew I worked with, especially **Tony Schiavone**, **Larry Zbyszko**, **Mike Tenay**, **Gene Okerlund**, **Bobby Heenan**, and even **Eric Bischoff**."

And I'd like to personally wish **Lee** all the best with his future endeavors.

That's all for now. I'll see you at the matches!

THERE IS BEDLAM in Piccadilly Circus, just as there is bedlam every night in Piccadilly Circus. If you've ever been there, you know what I mean. If you haven't been there, just imagine Times Square on New Year's Eve, only it happens every night of the year in Piccadilly Circus. And if you've never been to Times Square on New Year's Eve, then the only way to best describe Piccadilly Circus is with the word bedlam.

It is hours after the WWF's Capital Carnage pay-per-view at Docklands Arena in London, and the more I walk around, the more I wonder how I was ever so lucky to land this plum assignment. Usually this column takes me to

ON THE ROAD

With Dave Lenker

such wrestling hotbeds as Asbury Park, New Jersey, Atlanta, Georgia, or sometimes even Detroit. Matt Brock's the one who usually gets to go to Japan and Europe. Me? I stay home and put in as much time at the office as possible.

Not this time, though, and all because Stu Saks realized there was extra money in the travel budget, and if we didn't use it by the time 1999 rolled around, it would be lost forever.

"Wanna go to London?" Stu asked.

"Would love to," I replied.

As European cities go, London isn't a bad wrestling time, although the woman at the desk of the bed and breakfast I stayed at had no idea that a big WWF event was taking place in the city. WCW has never held a pay-per-view in England, and the WWF has held two previous. The first was a big one, SummerSlam '92, when Davey Boy Smith beat Bret Hart for the Intercontinental title. The town celebrated. On the second show in 1997, One Night Only, Smith lost the European title to Shawn Michaels. There was no celebration that night.

This time, however, the WWF went into London without a major England-born wrestler on the card and no Europeans in the main event: Steve Austin vs. Mankind, Kane, and The Undertaker in a four-way match. The European title wasn't on the line because X-Pac, the European champion, wrestled Rocky Maivia for the World title. This seemed like a bad move on the WWF's part: A major pay-per-view event in Europe should have had a European title bout. And X-Pac lost to Maivia, so there was no celebrating for the Europeans.

Walking around Piccadilly Circus after midnight, I saw a few people wearing Austin 3:16 T-shirts, a few more wearing T-shirts from the pay-per-view, and a bevy of blonde English girls waiting outside Planet Hollywood because they had heard a rumor that Val Venis was inside.

"Have you seen him?" I asked the girls.

They ignored me as if I wasn't there. They craned their long, lovely necks to try to see inside. After several moments, one of them answered.

"He's in there—I just know it," she squealed. I realized right then and there that groupies are the same all over the world. Doesn't matter whether they're in England or the United States.

About an hour later, I saw Hunter Hearst Helmsley coming out of an upscale restaurant. I walked up to him and asked what he

(Continued on page 72)



"Stone-Cold" stunned Mankind and all of Britain at the Capital Carnage pay-per-view in London, England. Dave Lenker wonders if wrestling will ever really catch on big time over there.

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Behind the Dressing Room Door

By Dave Rosenbaum

JUST STANDING AROUND the locker room at the FleetCenter in Boston the other day, waiting for Steve Austin to emerge from the shower after he won his four-way match against The Undertaker, Kane, and Rocky Maivia, when I got to small-talking with a few other reporters. The conversation came around to INSIDE WRESTLING's computer tournament, which was about to gear up, when Austin walked by and overheard us talking.

"Computer tournament, huh?" Austin said.

"Yeah," I said. "We do it every year. We take all the top wrestlers, then we feed them into a computer with their information, and the computer tells us what would happen."

"Let me guess," Austin said. "Me vs. Goldberg in the finals. You guys have been harping for that match all year."

"Well, I don't know," I explained. "Maybe Goldberg, but definitely not you."

Austin paused. He looked at me hard. It was that "Stone-Cold" look, and I didn't like it. I gripped my pen hard.

"You're not eligible."

He look at me hard again. I gripped my pen harder, but it almost slipped out of my sweaty palms.

"Who's running this damn thing, McMahon?" he growled.

Now I could see that for once, he was only kidding. I realized that a man like Steve Austin, who has his hands full with Vince McMahon, his stooges, Rocky Maivia, The Undertaker, Paul Bearer, and a lot of other people, has no time to worry about fantasy computer tournaments. Still, I felt I owed him an explanation.

"Let's face it, Steve, last year at this time, you weren't even champion yet, you hadn't even won the Royal Rumble," I said. "You went out in the first round, and according to our rules, first-round losers are ineligible for the following year's tournament."

Now Austin was almost smiling a little. He pulled on his jeans and grabbed a T-shirt. The other reporters formed a circle around Austin.

"Sounds to me like McMahon got a hold of your little computer and infected it with some kind of stooge virus," he cracked. "If I were you guys, I'd change the damn rules."

I had to admit—Austin didn't have a bad idea. Usually, last year's computer tournament first-round losers are this year's has-beens. Not in this case. Not by a long-shot. Last year's first-round losers included Austin and WWF World champion Rocky Maivia, which meant there was no way we could have a computer tournament final between the WWF World champion and the WCW World champion, no way we could have an Austin vs. Maivia grudge match, and no way we could have that Goldberg vs. Austin dream match.

Of course, what Austin really wants is a real match between himself and WWF

head Vince McMahon.

"There isn't a computer in the world that could conceive of the damage I'd do to him," Austin said. "If that yellow rat ever had the courage to put his [butt] on the line, I'd hand it right back to him on a silver platter. One of these days, it ain't gonna matter, because I'm gonna grab him by the neck and rip him apart. He has a choice. He can either fight me voluntarily or do it the hard way. I'd suggest he moves to another country."

Austin's 1998 quickly went from glory—winning the WWF World title—to ordeal—trying to fight off McMahon and his stooges—to horror—losing the belt, thanks to McMahon's cheating. He has been the target of McMahon's conspiracy for the past year, and now it looks like he'll never regain the WWF title.

(Continued on page 74)



Forget about the INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament—Steve Austin has a very real challenger to worry about in The Undertaker. Austin wasn't eligible for this year's tournament anyway.

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the Insider

by Brandi Mankiewicz

(The opinions expressed in this column are those of Brandi Mankiewicz alone and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of anyone else on the staff of this magazine.)

I HAVE FINALLY come to realize that "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin is actually good for the rulebreaking set in professional wrestling.

Now at first glimpse, many of you will find that statement strange given that it is emanating from my full, pouting lips, but I stand behind it. The "Rattlesnake" is the best thing ever to happen to the evil element in this sport of kings. Allow me to bestow upon you the top reasons why "Stone-Cold" is a boon to badness.

"Stone-Cold" Steve Austin is good for rulebreaking because he brought out the *real* Vince McMahon. For years, I was convinced that Vinnie Mac was nothing more than a biased ring announcer who was only interested in hyping the good and disparaging the bad. I listened to his raspy voice singing the praises of one WWF hero after another until I was nauseous. Little did I know that his standards were relatively high. For when "Stone-Cold" broke onto the scene, the WWF head was less than thrilled. When Austin won the WWF title, the *true* Vincent K. McMahon Jr. emerged.

Now he has finally crossed the line into active competition. He entered the Royal Rumble bound and determined to do what many have failed to do thus far: take Austin out and forever rid the WWF of his sickening presence.

Steve Austin brought The Un-

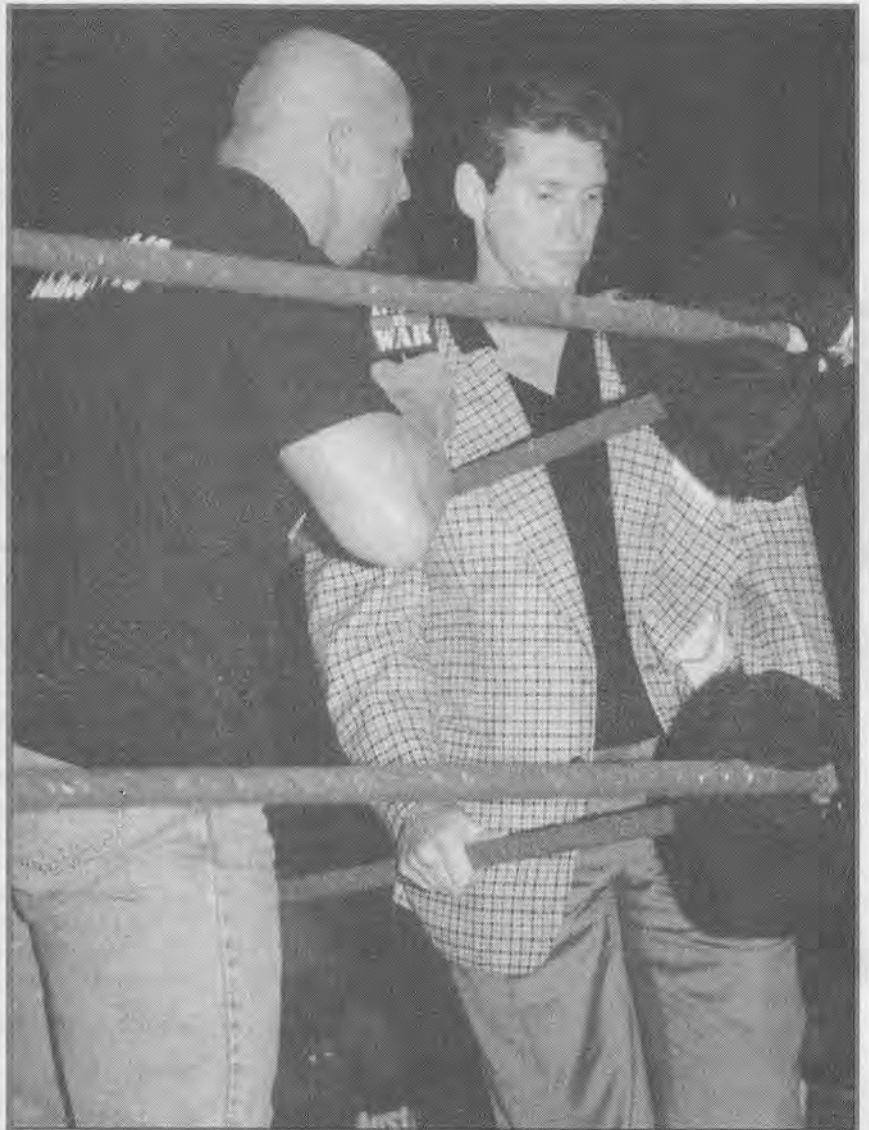
dertaker back to the dark side.

For years, 'Taker was nothing more than a dead man walking contradiction. He wore black. He spoke of death. He embraced evil. And yet he developed a strange and dysfunctional relationship with his creatures of the night. As Austin contin-

ued to ascend to the top of the WWF, Undertaker sank deeper into degradation. His feud with Kane was a constant distraction on his way back to the WWF title. Frustrated, he lashed out at Austin, courtesy of a shovel to "Stone-Cold's" bald pate. The Undertaker is redefining the typical attack on a fan fave. He has graduated from physical attacks to incorporating the mortuary sciences into his arsenal. Impressive.

Steve Austin made a man out of Shawn Michaels. Finally, a rule-breaking stint from HBK that I can appreciate. I realize that Michaels has yet to confront Austin (at least

(Continued on page 76)

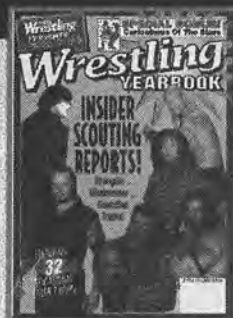


C'mon now, Vince, admit it. "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin unleashed a side of you that had been suppressed for a long time. At least he's done *some* good for the WWF.

WRESTLING COLLECTORS!

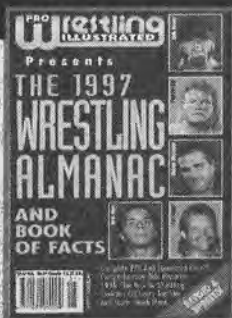
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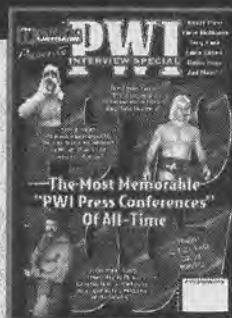
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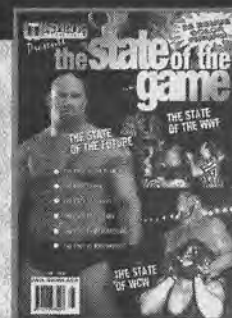
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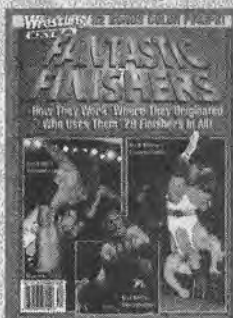
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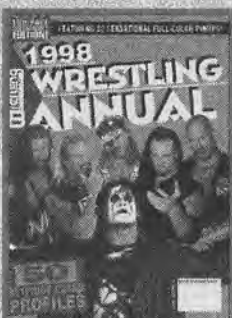
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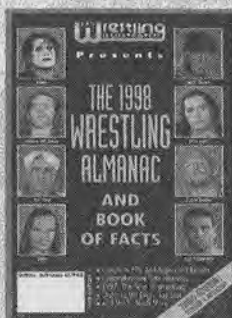
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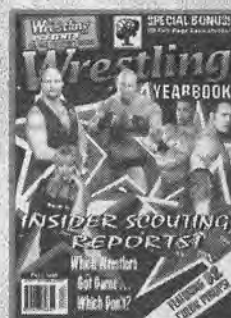
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ON Assignment

By Liz Hunter

BACK IN 1984, there were three major promotions that **INSIDE WRESTLING** and its sister publications gave world title status: the WWF, NWA, and the AWA. We all know that 1984 was the year in which Vince McMahon Jr. began his aggressive push into the national spotlight. He crossed territorial borders and made the WWF a national promotion. Much of his success came at the expense of his rivals. He dug into his deep pockets to sign wrestlers from the other Big Two. Some damage was done in the NWA, but it could not compare to what he did to the AWA. Vince plucked wrestlers and other personnel out of the Minnesota-based promotion left and right. In a short time, AWA stalwarts such as Hulk Hogan, Rick Martel, David Shultz, Ken Patera, Mad Dog Vachon, Bobby Heenan, Gene Okerlund, and Jim Brunzell bolted to the WWF. The AWA never fully recovered and limped along until 1990, when it finally folded.

Nearly 15 years later, we are experiencing a similar phenomenon. The players are different, but the story may tragically have the same ending. In the past few years, ECW has lost many of its most prominent wrestlers to WCW—names like Raven, Perry Saturn, The Sandman, Bam Bam Bigelow, and Mikey Whipwreck. Even Chris Benoit, Eddy Guerrero, and Dean Malenko used to be fixtures there. Normally, that type of thing goes on over the course of a year, but the breakneck pace at which wrestlers are leaving the Philadelphia-based federation is frighteningly similar to what happened a decade-and-a-half ago.

Is ECW about to become the AWA of the 1990s? It could. Look at the state of the AWA at the time of

McMahon's raid. It was a large promotion with an impressive roster of major stars capable of generating a great deal of money for promoters. The thought of the AWA closing its doors was unthinkable. With all due respect to ECW, the AWA had bigger stars at the time it "did battle" with the WWF.

But ECW is facing competition that is more formidable than the

competition facing the AWA in 1984. Back then, the AWA faced an aggressive promoter taking a calculated risk. ECW is up against the mighty Time Warner money machine. If you work in an industry in which injuries (some of them career-ending) happen all the time, you certainly need to look for financial stability for yourself and your family.

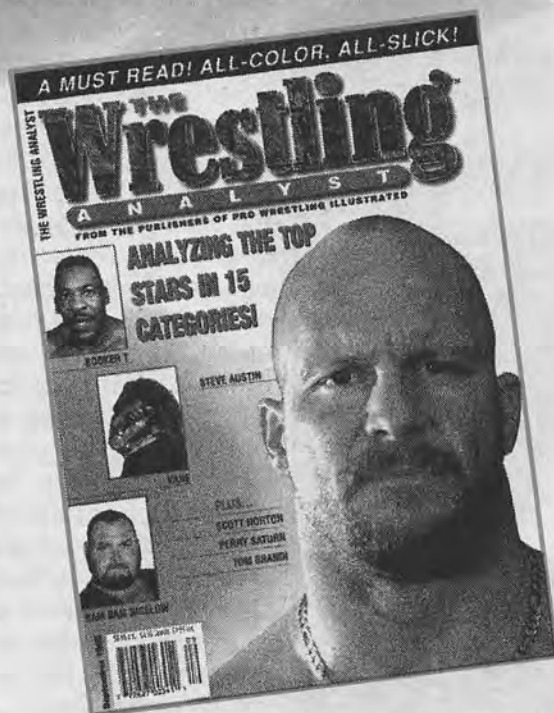
(Continued on page 77)



Raven (shown battling "Diamond" Dallas Page) has made a big impact on WCW since making the jump from ECW. He has been a good investment for WCW. WCW's motivations for signing certain other ECW stars isn't so clear.

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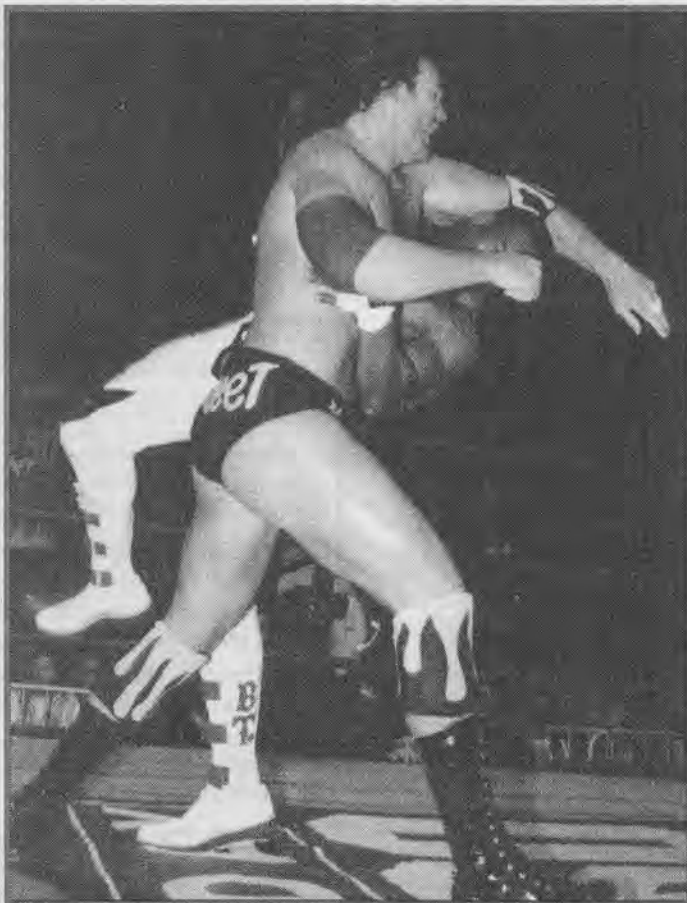
INSIDE WRESTLING CAPSULE PROFILE ²⁷⁸

SCOTT HALL

HIS TUMULTUOUS relationship with Kevin Nash and the NWO might ultimately define his career, but Scott Hall has been an accomplished tag team and singles wrestler for well over a decade now ...

Got his start in 1984 and wrestled in Florida with Dan Spivey ... Was trained by Harley Race, Pat O'Connor, Rick Martel, and Curt Hennig ... Captured the AWA World tag team title with Hennig on January 18, 1986 (*"Curt was a dependable partner then"*) ... Moved to the CWA and NWA in 1989, but had very little success ... Took several months off before returning to WCW under the tutelage of "Diamond" Dallas Page, who gave Hall an image makeover ... Called himself The Diamond Studd and introduced the Diamond death drop (Outsider's edge) in 1991 ... Jumped to the WWF in mid-'92, calling himself "Bad Guy" Razor Ramon, and feuded with Randy Savage (*"I've always been the real 'Macho Man'"*) ... Later feuded with Bret Hart, Big Bossman, and Curt Hennig, among others ... Finally turned full-fledged fan favorite when he got into a feud with Ted DiBiase and Irwin R. Schyster (Michael Wall Street) ... Won the vacant Intercontinental

title on September 23, 1993, when he pinned Rick Martel after both men survived a 20-man battle royal ... Had a sizzling feud with Shawn Michaels that culminated in a historic ladder match at WrestleMania X (*"The greatest match of my life"*) ... Lost the I-C belt to Diesel (Nash) less than a



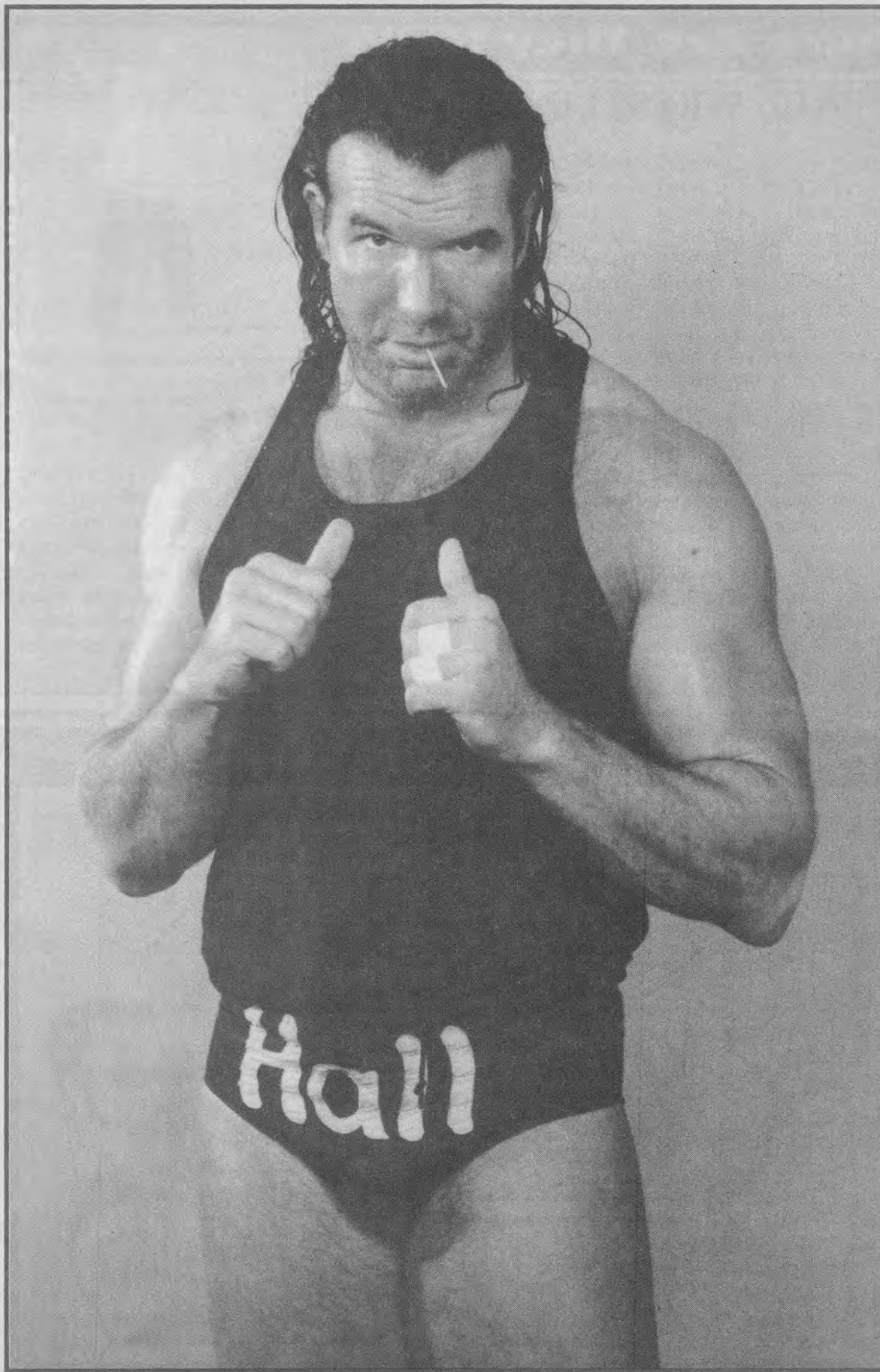
"Lone Wolf" Scott Hall drops Booker T with a clothesline. After years of fighting with just about everybody in WCW, Hall says he will travel alone from now on.

month later, but regained it at SummerSlam '94 ... Won his third I-C title from Jeff Jarrett on May 19, 1995, but lost it back to "Double-J" just three days later (*"Everybody wanted to get the gold from me"*) ... Won his fourth I-C belt from Dean (Shane) Douglas on October 22, 1995 ...

A few months after dropping the I-C belt to Goldust, Hall took some time off, then showed up unexpectedly on the May 27, 1996, *Nitro* to declare war on WCW (*"Guess I shook up the world"*) ... Was joined by Nash, and they called themselves The Outsiders ... Later joined by

Hollywood Hogan, who renamed their movement the New World Order ... Hall and Nash defeated Harlem Heat for the WCW tag team title on October 27, 1996 ... Won the title again by beating the Steiners at SuperBrawl VIII (*"We had people running scared from us"*) ... Hall took some time off to address personal problems, but returned at the Slamboree pay-per-view, where he inexplicably attacked Nash, costing them the tag belts ... Claimed Nash wasn't around to help him through his problems (*"Big Kev let me down big time"*) ... Started showing up drunk at WCW functions and attacked Nash on numerous occasions ... Feuded briefly with Nash, but the two have since

made an uneasy peace ... Has been battling Scott Steiner and the rest of the NWO black and white since punching out WCW President Eric Bischoff ... Has declared himself a "lone wolf" (*"Scott Hall doesn't need the NWO—or anybody else—any more"*). □



SCOTT HALL

Where Are They NOW

MR. WRESTLING II

The black and white mask. The resounding thud of a brutal kneelift to an opponent's face. Thousands of people yelling, "Two! Two! Two!" every time he wrestled. Those are what most long-time fans remember best about Mr. Wrestling II.

"I'd be a liar if I told you I didn't love the adoration of the fans," II said as he relaxed between holes at Honolulu's EWA Beach Club. "Whenever I was down and out, they motivated me to come back and win. It was because of them that I had such a successful career."

His biggest successes came during the late-'70s and '80s, when he was one of the main attractions of both *Georgia Championship Wrestling* and

World Championship Wrestling. His feuds with Prof. Toru Tanaka, Ric Flair, Bobby Shane, Harley Race, and Masked Superstar helped keep a lot of Southern promoters' wallets stuffed.

After retiring from active competition in 1988, II moved back to Honolulu. "I was born here, but I'm not Hawaiian," he said. "When I lived in Atlanta, my wife and kids and I always came back here for vacations. I love the fresh air and being close to the ocean."

When he's not in his beautiful home, II can usually be found boating, swimming, or scuba diving. "Those are my passions," he continued. "I also do some surfing, too—channel-



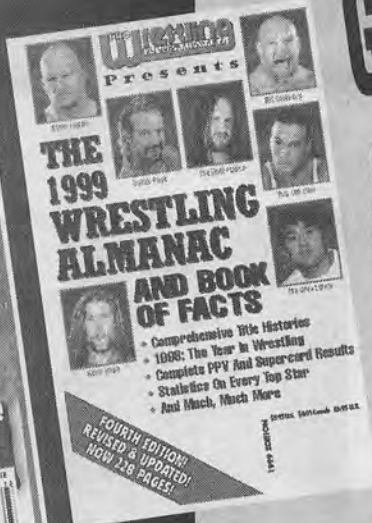
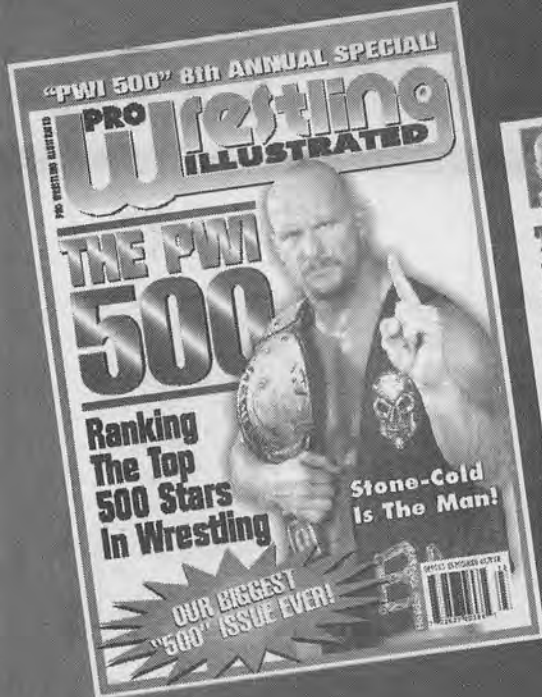
"It's only a few hundred feet to my next hole-in-one!" Mr. Wrestling II points out as he enjoys a round of golf near his home in Honolulu.

surfing from my couch. I love watching TV, and I do watch my share of wrestling. I'm very impressed with some of the young talent I see, especially that Juventud Guerrera fellow and Billy Kidman. Hell, sometimes I wish I was back there mixin' it up with 'em!"

Rick Mahr's World

A Scene from the Year 2000 Presidential Debates





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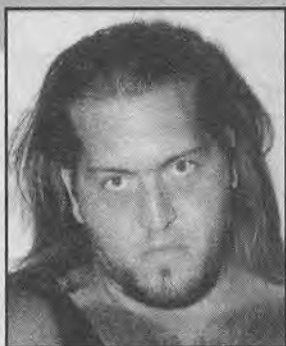
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NEWS FROM THE

ASBURY PARK, NJ
BY KYLE GRAHAM



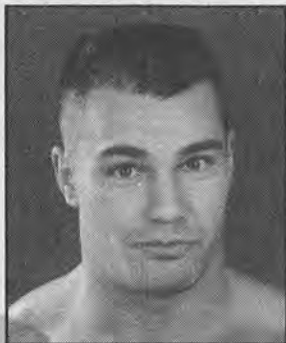
DALLAS PAGE
VS.
THE GIANT



"Diamond" Dallas Page was victorious in his match against The Giant, but the real winners of this charity event were the New Jersey literacy programs that received the proceeds from the event. Page was especially fired up for this bout because it was held in front of his hometown crowd. The Giant didn't have a chance to gain an advantage, as Page controlled the match from the start. DDP was so excited that he even incorporated several top-ropes maneuvers into his usual ground-based offense. One top-rope leap almost ended in disaster when The Giant caught DDP in a choke-slam position, but Page somehow turned it into a Diamond cutter to get the pinfall win.

OTHER BOUTS: Hell Raiser pinned J.L. Superstar ... Wrath defeated Lodi ... Alex Wright beat Glacier ... WCW cruiserweight champ Billy Kidman defeated Disco Inferno ... Konnan & Perry Saturn defeated Raven & Kanyon.

PHILADELPHIA, PA
BY JOHN RECKLA



LANCE STORM
VS.
JERRY LYNN



Lynn started strongly in this match by surprising Storm with a top-rope splash that knocked Storm out of the ring. Lynn continued his attack by punishing Storm both in and out of the ring and getting several near-falls. Storm retaliated, though, and never relinquished the advantage as he and Lynn went after each other in the ring and through the crowd. After getting several near-falls himself, Storm knocked out Lynn with Dawn Marie's loaded purse and pinned him.

OTHER BOUTS: Spike Dudley beat Mr. Hughes ... The Blue Meanie, Chris Chetti, & Super Nova beat Danny Doring, Amish Roadkill, & Skull Von Crush ... ECW TV champ Rob Van Dam beat Rod Price ... Little Guido defeated Mike Lozansky ... Lance Storm beat Mikey Whipwreck ... New Jack wrestled John Kronus to a no-contest ... Justin Credible, Buh Buh Ray Dudley, & D-Von Dudley beat Masato Tanaka, Mahoney, & Tommy Dreamer ... Sabu & Rob Van Dam beat Shane Douglas & Taz.

CINCINNATI, OH
BY LAURA KEISER



ROCKY MAIVIA
VS.
KANE



Big Bossman served as special guest referee for this cage match, and he went out of his way to help the WWF World champion keep his title. Every time Kane had Rocky pinned, Bossman was slow getting into position to make a count. He even looked away as Rocky belted Kane with Bossman's nightstick. Late in the match, Rocky hit Kane with his corporate elbow, but Kane got right back up. As Kane went to choke-slam Bossman, Rocky nailed Kane with the Rock Bottom and got the pin.

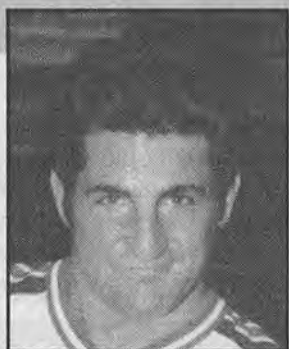
OTHER BOUTS: Golga & Kurrgan beat Too Much ... Christian Cage & Sable defeated Marc Mero & Jacquelyn ... Steven Regal beat 2 Cold Scorpio ... Val Venis pinned Goldust ... Gangrel & Edge beat The Disciples of Apocalypse ... WWF Intercontinental champ Ken Shamrock pinned Mankind in a no-DQ, falls-count-anywhere match ... Jeff Jarrett pinned Al Snow ... Steve Blackman beat The Blue Blazer ... The New Age Outlaws beat D-Lo Brown & Mark Henry.

WRESTLING CAPITALS

**JOHNSON CITY, TN
BY FRANK MILLER**



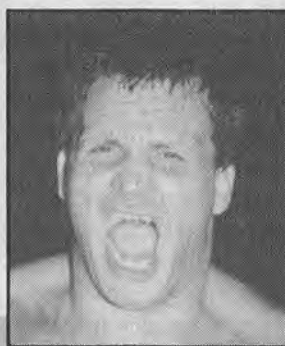
**BILLY KIDMAN
VS.
DISCO INFERNO**



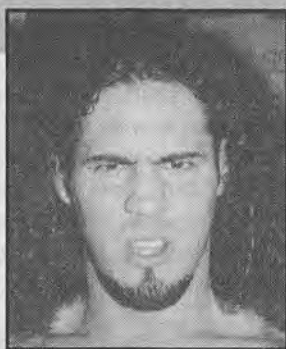
WCW cruiserweight champ Billy Kidman's popularity keeps rising, and his high-energy matches are a big part of the reason. Disco gained an early advantage over Kidman, but it didn't last long. His attempt to piledrive Kidman on top of his cruiserweight belt was blocked, and Kidman skillfully reversed the move into a DDT. From there, Kidman took over the offense and didn't let Disco do much for the rest of the bout. In the end, he hit Disco with a guillotine legdrop, then finished him off with a beautiful shooting star press.

OTHER BOUTS: Scotty Riggs defeated Alex Wright ... Dean Malenko & Chris Benoit defeated Mike Enos & Barry Darrow after Arn Anderson interfered ... Bobby Duncum Jr. defeated WCW TV champion Chris Jericho in a non-title match ... Lex Luger beat Stevie Ray by submission ... WCW U.S. champion "Diamond" Dallas Page defeated Brian Adams.

**STEELTON, PA
BY JEFF AMDUR**



**STEVE LOMBARDI
VS.
JULIO SANCHEZ**



Lombardi taunted Sanchez even before the bout started and continued to do it after the opening bell. Interference from Lombardi's manager, Harvey Wippleman, backfired several times early in the match, but Lombardi eventually gained the upper hand. Once he did, he let Harvey get some shots in on Sanchez. Sanchez tried to rally with a sunset flip, but the referee was distracted and couldn't make the count. Later, as Sanchez tried a back suplex, Harvey tripped him, sending Lombardi to the mat on top of Sanchez. "The Brooklyn Brawler" got the pin while Wippleman held Sanchez' leg.

OTHER BOUTS: Mike Quackenbush pinned Tommy Idol ... Doink the Clown defeated Rob Noxious ... Paul Mitchell & The Cremator wrestled Troy Mest & Maxx Crimson to a no-contest ... Dana Hinkle won a battle royal ... Don Rott defeated Dana Hinkle to win the Steelton City title and trophy ... IPW champion Tom Brandi beat King Kong Bundy by disqualification.

**LONDON, ENGLAND
BY PAUL LLOYD**



**HUNTER HEARST
HELMSLEY
VS.
JEFF JARRETT**



"Triple-H" looked a little rusty as he battled Jarrett at the Capital Carnage pay-per-view at Docklands Arena, but he was still able to control most of the match. Debra McMichael tried to interfere on Jarrett's behalf several times, but she was stopped immediately by Chyna. Helmsley eventually decided to ignore what was going on at ringside. He finally put away Jarrett with a pedigree.

OTHER BOUTS: Gangrel defeated Al Snow ... The Headbangers defeated Darren Drozdov & Animal ... Val Venis beat Goldust ... Tiger Ali Singh defeated Edge ... Christian Cage & Sable beat Marc Mero & Jacquelyn ... WWF Intercontinental champ Ken Shamrock defeated Steve Blackman ... WWF World tag team champs The New Age Outlaws beat D-Lo Brown & Mark Henry ... WWF World champion Rocky Maivia defeated X-Pac ... Steve Austin defeated Mankind, Kane, and The Undertaker in a four-way match.



Matt Brock's **Plain** *Speaking*

Harder than nails, veteran wrestling reporter Matt Brock has logged more miles covering wrestling than any other journalist. Every month Matt will travel to the sport's hotbeds, reporting everything he sees without fear or favor

Hanging around with Hollywood types isn't usually my kind of thing, but when an old friend in the entertainment business offered me a ticket to *The Tonight Show* on Thanksgiving, I realized it would be journalistically irresponsible to turn him down. These tickets come cheap—they're free—but they don't come easily, because every tourist in Cali-

fornia wants one, and considering Hulk—no Hollywood for me, bucko—Hogan was supposed to make his retirement announcement, I hastily accepted and hopped the next flight west out of JFK. Turned out to be a good move, because Hogan did as expected and announced his retirement after banging heads for 20 years in this racket. Watching Leno interview Hogan was awfully frustrating from a journalistic point-of-view because it was clear Hogan didn't say one sincere word, including "I retire," but Leno kept playing along. Somehow, when Hogan says, "Thank you," as he did to the fans, it feels like he's patting you on

the back with one hand and sticking his hand in your pocket with the other. Hogan says he's going to run for President of the United States, and he's got about as much of a chance as Bill Clinton being elected president of the National Organization for Women. I say that because for all the people in the audience that I saw applauding Hogan's every word, I saw just as many shaking their heads and trying to keep from laughing. Jesse Ventura won in Minnesota because he knew how to relate to people. He sounded honest. Hogan sounds like a carnival barker. Then he made another big mistake by badmouthing Ventura, who happens to be very popular right now. During one of the commercial breaks, a woman sitting next to me nudged me in the stomach and asked, "Do you think he's serious?" "Lady," I said, "Hulk Hogan is never serious." Just remember that you heard it from me: Hogan has not wrestled his last match.

Watching Bill Apter present Little Louie with the Sky Low Low Memorial Award for Lifetime Achievement reminded me of an era when midget matches were not only on every card, but

BURBANK, CA



HOGAN AND LENO



RIC FLAIR

were pretty popular. Nowadays, call a midget a midget and some bleeding heart will tap you on the shoulder and scold you for not referring to the guy as vertically challenged. Sky Low Low was undoubtedly the greatest midget wrestler of our time, and Little Louie, the ECWA midget champion, was rightfully touched to be mentioned in the same breath with the man he called his mentor. The problem with midget matches is that they've always had a carnival sideshow atmosphere about them. I've known a few wrestlers in my time who refused to appear on cards in which midgets were involved. They felt it cheapened the sport. Kind of like when Bill Veeck signed a midget to bat for the Chicago White Sox. But Sky Low Low was a very

WILMINGTON, DE

talented wrestler who didn't cheapen anything. He had great moves and great speed, and although I'm sure he would have been flattened by the heavyweights, he had a rightful place in the sport. Unfortunately, Sky Low Low was laughed at more than he was applauded (at least by those fans who stuck around to watch the midget matches; most people took a bathroom break or headed for the refreshment stands). Sometimes you have to look past a man's size.

Another thing I won't believe the next time I hear it is Ric Flair announcing his retirement. Flair, like Hogan, probably means it every time he says he's stepping down, but the pull of the squared circle is so strong that he can't stay away. Kind of like an alcoholic with his bottle of Jack Daniel's or a nicotine freak who can't keep

away from the Marlboros. Used to know a man who was addicted to those shuffleboard games they have in bars. People who knew him thought he had some kind of alcohol problem because he'd go to the bars every night, but anyone who saw him at the bars knew he'd have one drink and play shuffleboard the rest of the night. Can't explain it—that's just the way it is. What this has to do with Flair is hard to say, but I do know this: He should have stayed away from the sport this time. The Horsemen are too much of a headache, Bischoff's a royal pain in the posterior, and the odds of him winning the WCW World title again are slim. Maybe the "Nature Boy" should run for political office. President, perhaps.

ATLANTA, GA

Getting closer to calling it quits. Was going over some recent issues of *Pro Wrestling Illustrated Weekly*, catching up on what was going on in the rest of the wrestling world, when I came upon this item: "Love Machine ... dressed up as Santa during a recent Nu-Wave Wrestling card and hit Miss Chrissy with a bag of toys, allowing Lady Dementia to pin her. Bah, humbug!" Bah, humbug, indeed. Don't know what would possess a grown wrestler to dress up like Santa Claus and use a bag of toys as a foreign object, and to tell you the truth, I don't want to know. Nor do I have any desire to ever see Miss Chrissy wrestle Lady Dementia. Not my cup of tea (not that it should be anyone's cup of tea). Maybe you've noticed, maybe you haven't, but a lot of the independent federations are getting further and further away from the mainstream. There was a time when I thought that was good, but now I'm not so sure, not after seeing this item. Wonder if I could live on Social Security for the next 20 years? □

NEW YORK, NY

THE INSIDE WRESTLING

dream pay-per-view. And don't forget the rising superstars from ECW and the top independent stars.

Unfortunately, a joint WWF/WCW/ECW/independent supercard isn't in the works.

Maybe it will never happen. But do not despair. You have the INSIDE WRESTLING Com-

puter Tournament '99.

Our computer tournament presents wrestling in its purest form. There are no disqualifications and no outside interference. As far as our computer is concerned, NWO Hollywood, the Wolfpac, The Triple Threat,

Team Corporate, and DeGeneration X do not exist, and there is a clear-cut winner in each bout. Just man against man, talent against talent. It's a world in which the most notorious rulebreaker might have a little trouble surviving.

With computer technology constantly evolving and getting faster every year, the computer we used for this year's tournament was bigger and faster than ever, too. It was based on a 450 MHz Pentium II processor. We added 128 megabytes of Sync DRAM, packed in a lightning-fast hard drive with 102 gigabytes of storage, and used the newest Windows 98

THERE'S PLENTY OF food for thought in wrestling these days. With the WWF vs. WCW war hotter than ever, wrestling fans can't help but wonder what might happen if the best from the WWF battled the best from WCW in a

FIRST ROUND

ROB VAN DAM
KEN SHAMROCK

KONNAN
CHRIS JERICHO

VAL VENIS
THE UNDERTAKER

KEVIN NASH
RECKLESS YOUTH

QUARTERFINALS

SEMIFINALS

CHAMP

COMPUTER TOURNAMENT 1998

operating system software. Then we handed over this brand-new, state-of-the-art toy to our resident computer expert and said, "Go at it, fella. Create the greatest wrestling simulation program ever."

Which is exactly what he did. After all, that's why he gets paid the big bucks. The program took into consideration every conceivable factor, including records, quality of opposition, stamina, offense, defense, aerial skills, scientific skills, and ability to adjust to opponents. A wrestler's performance and injuries suffered early in the tournament would affect him later in the tourna-

ment. Injuries were cumulative. So was stamina.

Finally, it was time to play.

For the INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament '99, we chose 16 of the finest wrestlers in the world: Bill Goldberg, Big Bossman, Bret Hart, Mankind, Shane Douglas, Taz, "Diamond" Dallas Page, Kane, Rob Van Dam, Ken Shamrock, Konnan, Chris Jericho, Val Venis, The Undertaker, Reckless Youth, and Kevin Nash.

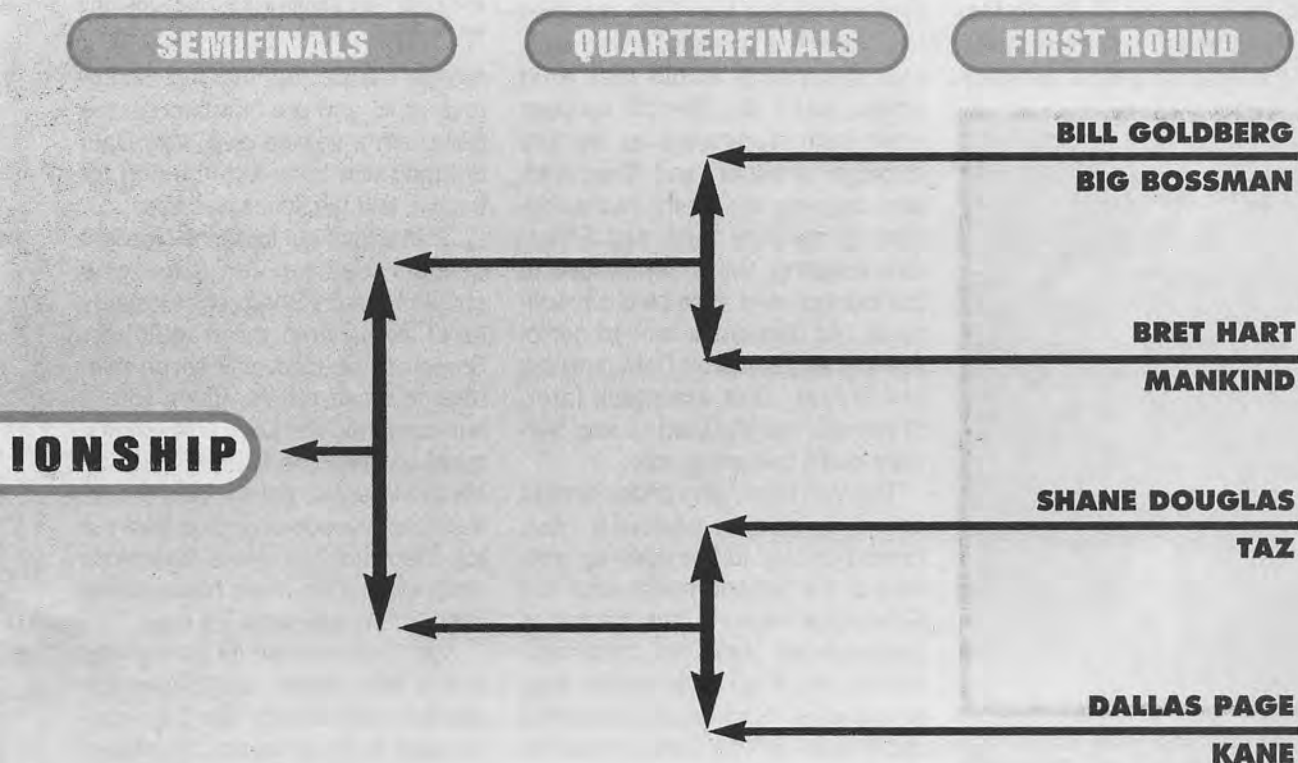
All of last year's first-round losers were ruled ineligible this year. That meant no Rocky Maivia, Steve Austin, Curt Hennig, Jeff Jarrett, Dean Malenko, Kensuke Sasaki, Lex

Luger, and Eddy Guerrero. The previous year's winner, Bret "Hitman" Hart, received an automatic bid.

We programmed the computer to randomly select a bracket for a single-elimination tournament with a best-of-seven-match series; the matches were held at the rate of one per day in each round. Each match was fought to a submission or pinfall.

It was a great tournament, full of dream matches and unexpected outcomes.

If only reality were this good! Now, let's get ready to rumble with the INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament '99!





ROB VAN DAM vs. KEN SHAMROCK

FIRST

Rob Van Dam and Ken Shamrock are not the same wrestler, but they're more similar than you might think. People might say both are crazy. Van Dam is one of the most reckless wrestlers in ECW. The ECW TV champ dives onto tables, executes high-flying moves, and goes head-to-head with some of the most dangerous men in the sport. Yet he rarely gets hurt.

Shamrock, the former UFC star, can't control himself sometimes. Take his match at WrestleMania XIV against Rocky Maivia, when Shamrock forced the Intercontinental champ to submit to an anklelock, but refused to release the hold. Since then, Shamrock has calmed down a bit and became one of Vince McMahon's flunkies, but he remains one of the most dangerous wrestlers

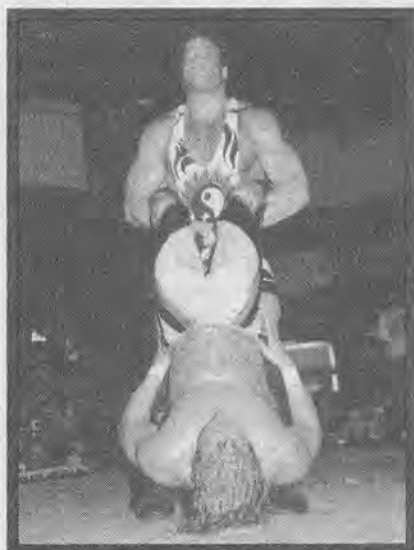
in the world.

Shamrock vs. Van Dam wasn't a dream first-round matchup, but it had wonderful possibilities. Both men have tremendous stamina. Van Dam has battled to 30-minute time-limit draws with Sabu. Shamrock can turn it on early—thanks to his UFC training—and turn it on late.

Both men are relatively small for heavyweights. Shamrock is 6', 235 pounds; Van Dam is 6', 237 pounds. But they make up for their lack of size with constant energy and motion. There figured to be little down time in this series.

Shamrock went for the win early in match one as he tried to wear down Van Dam with classic wrestling moves, but Van Dam matched him. After five minutes, it was obvious the match would last a lot longer, and it did. After 20 minutes, Van Dam appeared to be the stronger wrestler, and Shamrock was favoring his oft-injured ankle. With 22 minutes gone, and Shamrock hobbling, Van Dam climbed to the top rope and attempted a moonsault, but Shamrock moved out of the way and sent Van Dam crashing to the mat. One anklelock later, Shamrock had the lead ... and Van Dam had a bad ankle, too.

But Van Dam, who prides himself on never getting seriously hurt, moved quickly in the opening minutes of the second match and had Shamrock backed into the ropes several times. Van Dam concentrated his attack on Shamrock's legs and ankles. Shamrock screamed out in pain as Van Dam twisted his ankle and toppled to the mat when he tried to get up. Van Dam spotted



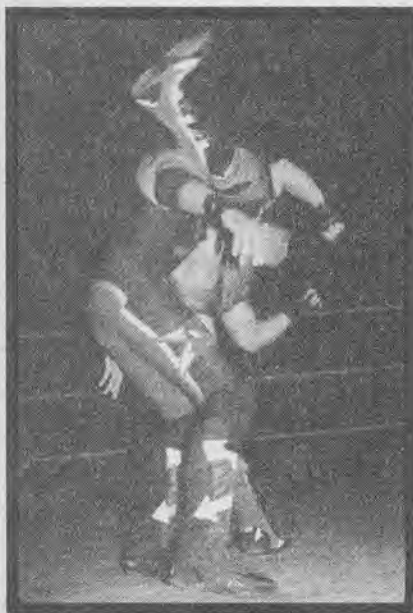
Rob Van Dam has no trouble throwing a wrestler as light as Jerry Lynn around the ring. But Shamrock? That wouldn't be so easy.

a table outside the ring, laid Shamrock on it, and put him through the table with a suicide dive. Van Dam dragged him back into the ring for the pin, and the series was tied.

That turned out to be the highlight of the series for Van Dam, who couldn't match Shamrock's energy level in the next three matches. Shamrock needed only seven minutes to finish off Van Dam with a huracarrana. Van Dam unleashed a aerial attack in the fourth match, but his recklessness got the best of him. Van Dam missed on a dive from the top rope and ran into a Shamrock clothesline. One more huracarrana later, Shamrock had a 3-1 lead.

Van Dam held on for 20 minutes in the fifth match, but Shamrock was too determined. Van Dam succumbed to an anklelock. Shamrock moved on in the tournament.

Shamrock wins the series, 4-1.



Ken Shamrock connects with a kick against X-Pac. He didn't try many kicks against Van Dam. Then again, he didn't need to.

CHRIS JERICO vs. KONNAN

ROUND

Unfortunately, we didn't need a computer to know how this series might turn out. Konnan defeated Chris Jericho for the WCW TV title on November 30 in real life. But that was only one match, and these two have yet to battle in a long feud or series.

The 5'10", 237-pound Konnan is comfortable brawling or wrestling, depending upon the size of his opponent. Matched up against the 5'10", 225-pound Jericho, Konnan figured to be comfortable using his entire repertoire. Jericho is an outstanding technical wrestler with fine balance and the ability to string moves together. His major shortcoming is that his arrogance allows him to think he can brawl with anybody. He can't.

By the way, the Jerichoholics—if there are any out there—were not a factor in this series. Our computer knew nothing about Jerichoholics.

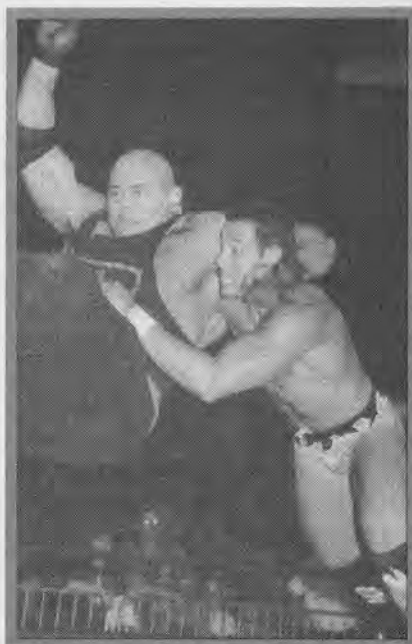
On to the series, one of the most

compelling of the first round. Jericho missed on a reverse kick shortly after the opening bell, and Konnan seized the advantage by concentrating his attack on Jericho's legs. A few drop-kicks to the knees stunned Jericho and had him backing up. Soon, however, it became clear that Jericho wasn't avoiding Konnan. He was studying him. Trying to figure him out. Konnan used a facebuster to score the pin at 9:37, but it seemed as if Jericho was playing possum.

If that was the case, however, then Jericho kept playing possum in the second match, because Konnan used his tequila sunrise leglock to score a victory by submission at 17:21. Konnan had avoided disaster three minutes into the match when he reached the ropes to escape Jericho's lion tamer. Konnan had a 2-0 lead.

Jericho, however, was indeed figuring out Konnan, move by move, second by second, and when the third match dragged into the 20th minute, Konnan was clearly in trouble. He seemed exhausted, while Jericho was full of energy. Jericho's outstanding anaerobic conditioning was paying off, as was his wide library of moves. He had a counter for everything Konnan threw at him. Konnan's attempted belly-to-back suplex was converted into a successful belly-to-back by Jericho, who then used his lion tamer to get the submission.

The situation worsened for Konnan in the fourth match. He couldn't match Jericho's aerial attack and fell victim to a Frankensteiner at 18:33. Jericho then took a 3-2 lead, this time by countering Konnan's rolling mat moves, fighting his way out of an attempted facebuster, and locking on



This flying bulldog from Konnan seemed to take Chavo Guerrero Jr. by surprise. By the time this series ended, very little Konnan did surprised Jericho.

the lion tamer for the submission.

But Jericho made a key mistake in match six. Overconfident from three straight victories, he tried to brawl with Konnan, who's a better brawler than Jericho. Konnan pounded Jericho into the mat, scored with a facebuster, and dropped an elbow onto Jericho to finish him.

Jericho and Konnan wrestled for their tournament lives in the deciding match. Konnan attacked early with a combination brawling attack that had Jericho backed up to the ropes. This early success, however, made Konnan too confident. He tried to beat Jericho at his own game. Konnan attempted a lion tamer, but Jericho simply reversed it into a lion tamer of his own and won the series at 7:45.

Jericho wins the series, 4-3.



If Chris Jericho has one major weakness, it is his tendency to get overconfident once he knocks a foe down. Overconfidence almost cost him big against Konnan.



THE UNDERTAKER vs. VAL VENIS

FIRST

On paper, Val Venis vs. Undertaker appeared to be a mismatch. Sure, Venis had scored numerous victories over Dustin "Goldust" Runnels, but some of those were matches in which Venis held a huge psychological advantage. After all, he had Goldust's estranged wife, Terri, at ringside. And, yes, Venis had pinned Kane in only 3:26. But Ken Shamrock had interfered in that match.

In this computer tournament, there is no interference. There are no managers or girlfriends at ringside. And Venis held no psychological advantage over Undertaker.

Could Venis, a well-rounded wrestler with a big mouth and bigger ego, overpower the invincible 'Taker? We didn't think he stood

much of a chance. What did the computer think?

Well, the computer thought that Undertaker, a power wrestler if there ever was one, wouldn't waste much time kicking Venis right in the groin. Venis spent most of the first three minutes of the first match doubled over in pain, while Undertaker stalked and taunted him from the perimeter of the ring. Just when it seemed Venis had recovered, The Undertaker floored him with a flying clothesline, then dropped a knee into his stomach.

Venis wasn't feeling too good about himself.

The Undertaker saw the opportunity to go for the kill and grabbed it. He lifted Venis and dropped him face-first onto the mat, turned him over, and covered him for the pin at 6:33.

Things weren't looking good for Venis. They looked even worse after three minutes of the second match, when Undertaker blocked his clothesline, grabbed his right arm, and twisted it behind his back. Venis screamed out in pain and desperately reached the ropes. Four minutes later, Venis tried to kick Undertaker in the groin, but 'Taker grabbed the heel of Venis' boot and sent him sprawling back into the ropes. Undertaker approached with arms outstretched. Venis had nowhere to go ... but down. Which is where he went after Undertaker's tombstone piledriver.

Venis never quite got this series

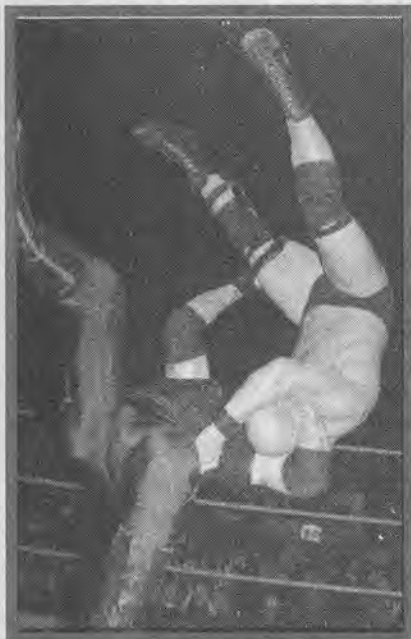


This kind of sight—Venis hurting an opponent (in this case Goldust)—is one we didn't see often in the Venis-Undertaker first-round series.

turned around. He rarely even had an advantage. Undertaker refused to be lured into Venis' transparent traps. Early in match three, Undertaker scored with another thunderous flying clothesline. Undertaker walked the top rope while Venis laid prone. Venis, given time to recover, tried to mount an offensive, but his attempt at a powerslam played right into 'Taker's hands. This time, a choke-slam by Undertaker finished Venis at 5:49.

Realizing he couldn't finish off Undertaker early, Venis tried to extend match four. He kept at a distance from The Undertaker, but that strategy was equally unsuccessful. Although the match lasted 15 minutes, Undertaker didn't have to do much, so stamina was not a factor. Intimidation, however, was. Venis was afraid to get too close to Undertaker. Finally, Undertaker finished him off with a vertical suplex, two flying clotheslines, and an ankle-lock. Venis gratefully submitted.

Undertaker wins the series, 4-0.



The vertical suplex has worked well for Undertaker in his matches with Steve Austin. Just about every move he used against Val Venis worked well.

RECKLESS YOUTH vs. KEVIN NASH

ROUND



Kevin Nash's brutal straight-ahead style can be too much for Scott Hall to handle at times. It certainly was too much for Reckless Youth to handle in this tournament.

Here's the bad news for Kevin Nash: The power bomb, his favorite finishing maneuver, has been banned by WCW (though there no longer seems to be any penalty for using it).

Here's the bad news for Reckless Youth: The INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament isn't played by WCW rules. Power bombs are legal in the INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament.

More bad news for Reckless Youth: His opponent in the first round of the tournament was Kevin Nash. It might have been the biggest mismatch in computer tournament history. Tale of the tape: Reckless Youth is 5'10" and weighs 200 pounds. Nash is 7' and weighs 356 pounds.

The matchup: Very good high-fly-

ing independent wrestler in the 1998 "PWI 500") vs. former WWF World champion.

We could've just turned off the computer for this one and made it up as we went along. Then again, didn't X-Pac once beat Scott Hall? Haven't there been plenty of giant killers in sports history?

Yes, there have been. But the idea of Reckless Youth beating Nash took the concept of an upset too far.

It's true that big men such as Nash often have trouble against smaller, more agile wrestlers. Nash is used to facing big men like The Giant and Scott Hall. The problem was, Reckless moonsaulting Nash figured to have all the impact of Reckless moonsaulting a brick wall. That's how it turned out.

Reckless Youth, knowing his only chance was to keep Nash moving and guessing, came out flying in the opening match and scored with a couple of high dropkicks. Nash just brushed them off. Two minutes into the match, Reckless Youth climbed to the top rope, but he wasn't sure about what he wanted to do next. A half-hearted moonsault met air when Nash backed off.

Five more minutes of this ineffective aerial stuff had Nash bored, so he decided to finish off his over-matched opponent. Reckless attempted an ill-advised dive from the second rope and Nash met Youth's neck with a clothesline. Then Nash simply power-bombed Reckless Youth and scored the pin at 7:01.

Nash has pretty good stamina for a big man and he showed it in the second match. Reckless Youth, who can wrestle all night, at first allowed

Nash to chase him around the ring, then backed off and scored with a few dropkicks. With seven minutes gone, Reckless Youth scored with a moonsault, but its effect was negligible. Youth kept going, but he couldn't wear down Nash. With 11 minutes gone, Nash said to himself, "Enough of this." He grabbed Reckless Youth, violently choke-slammed him to the mat, and scored the pin.

By the third match, Reckless Youth realized his situation was hopeless. Nash's weight, height, and power advantage were too imposing. Nash bounced Reckless Youth off the ropes and scored with a clothesline on the rebound, then used a flying clothesline to finish him off at 6:01. In the fourth match, Nash pounded Reckless from the opening bell in an attempt to finish him off early. Reckless Youth didn't execute a single offensive move and fell prey to a power bomb at 3:33.

Nash wins the series, 4-0.



Reckless had no choice but to go to the air against Nash. He put forth a valiant effort, but he couldn't overcome a huge size disadvantage.

BILL GOLDBERG vs. BIG BOSSMAN

FIRST



If Goldberg can jackhammer The Giant, imagine what he could do to Bossman. Would Goldberg get a chance to use his finisher on him? Would he even need to?

Bossman revived his career by returning to the WWF and winning the Hardcore title, but he has fallen a long way since the late-1980s, when he was a top contender to the WWF World title. Sure, he has tons of size, but little of it is muscle. Bill Goldberg, the *PWI* Rookie of the Year and first runner-up for Wrestler of the Year, packs a ton of muscle onto his 270-pound frame ... and he has a fierce killer instinct.

This wasn't the most intriguing first-round matchup. The only type of wrestler that figured to give Goldberg any kind of test was one who could take him past the 20th minute. His stamina has never been tested. But Bossman isn't in

great anaerobic shape. He does his best wrestling in the first five minutes. That's exactly when Goldberg is usually getting ready to put his helpless opponents to bed.

Still, what Bossman lacks in stamina, he makes up for in determination, power, and ego. He certainly wouldn't go into a series against Goldberg believing he had no chance of winning. More likely, he'd consider himself the favorite.

Well, let Bossman bet on himself, because he wouldn't get our money. Especially after this wrestling clinic put on by the intense Goldberg.

Bossman tried to tackle Goldberg in the opening minute of the first match, but Goldberg didn't budge. Then, while Bossman tried to figure out what to do next, Goldberg charged at him from halfway across the ring and sent him sprawling. Right then, Bossman knew he was in trouble.

The series lasted a total of 21 minutes 43 seconds ... all matches combined. Goldberg needed less than five minutes to win the first match. Bossman couldn't even budge him on an attempted slam, and Goldberg—just about laughing—whipped Bossman into the ropes, clotheslined him, then scored with a jackhammer.

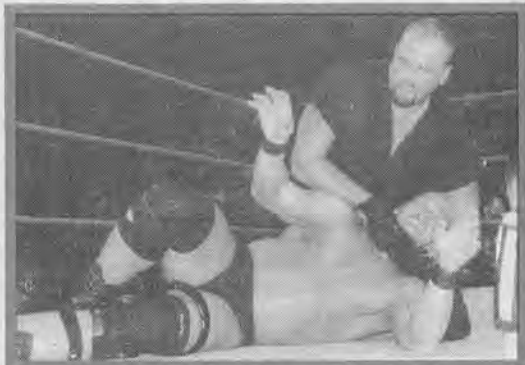
The second match lasted less than four minutes. Bossman again came out strong, but he couldn't hurt Goldberg. Goldberg dropped Bossman with a sidekick, then stunned the

big man with a spear. Bossman actually got up quickly from the spear, but Goldberg was waiting for him with another jackhammer. In retrospect, Bossman should have stayed down.

The third match was the marathon, a seven-minute affair in which Bossman scored his only pin attempt of the match, a two-count after he turned Goldberg's missed clothesline into a clothesline of his own. Goldberg kicked out, regained the advantage, tackled Bossman, weakened him with a leglock, then speared Bossman as he limped around the ring. Of course, the jackhammer and pin followed.

Obviously not caring to waste more time, Goldberg finished off the series in a hurry. He controlled the fourth match from the opening bell, pummeling Bossman with punches and kicks, charging him like a bull and tackling him to the mat, then spearing him for the finish. It was as if Goldberg was saying, "He isn't worth my jackhammer." Goldberg covered him for the easy pin.

Goldberg wins the series, 4-0.



Big Bossman might be tough enough to manhandle "Stone-Cold" at times, but we doubt he's strong enough to push Bill Goldberg around.

BRET HART vs. MANKIND

ROUND

Bret Hart has been involved in a lot of recent brawls against the likes of Sting and Dallas Page. But those were brawls against technical wrestlers or were the result of hatred between two wrestlers. His first-round opponent, however, is perhaps the best pure brawler in the world, the king of falls-count-anywhere matches: Mankind.

Fortunately for Hart, falls didn't count everywhere in the INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament '99. The only falls that counted were those taking place in the ring. And our computer wasn't told that some wrestlers use tables and chairs as instruments of brawling. Mankind, who has never seen a foreign object he didn't like, would be restricted to the use of his own two hands and feet.

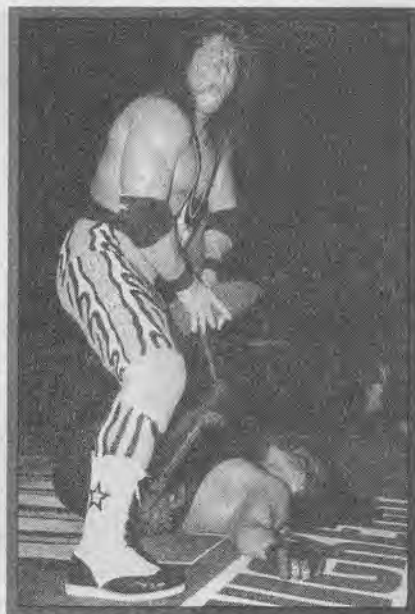
Not that Bret isn't a capable

brawler. But he wouldn't want to trade punches and kicks with a mad-man like Mankind. If he could turn the match into a test of technical prowess and stamina, he'd have a great chance of winning. Otherwise, he'd be in trouble.

Mankind, who never heard of pacing himself, attacked Hart from the opening bell of the first match and battered him with forearms and kicks. Hart tried to hang in, which proved to be a mistake. He should have made Mankind chase him. Bret, however, often lets his pride get the best of him, and that was the case here. Mankind wanted to brawl, so Bret brawled. As the match wore into the eighth minute, Mankind scored with a clothesline, then locked on his mandible claw. Bret submitted.

Hart suffered from some wear and tear in the first match. Mankind had smartly concentrated on his oft-injured wrists and knees. Mankind has proven impervious to pain, so Hart didn't know where to attack. A much smarter Hart wrestled the second match. He kept at arm's length from Mankind for the first five minutes, then knocked his confused opponent to the mat with a Russian legsweep. The two brawled on the mat for about a minute before Bret got up and put Mankind back down with an armdrag takedown. Forced to wrestle, Mankind was like a fish out of water.

Bret's problem was that Mankind is by no means stupid and knows when a match isn't going his way. Throughout this series, Hart couldn't maintain his momentum for long stretches, and Mankind always



Bret has clamped his sharpshooter on just about every one of his WCW opponents. In our computer tournament, he got another chance to put it on Mankind.

found a way to get in an eyepoke here, a twist of the wrist there. Hart DDT'd and pinned Mankind to even the series in match two, but Mankind outbrawled Bret in the third and fourth matches to take a commanding 3-1 lead.

Hart refused to go quietly. The fifth and sixth matches were wrestled on his terms, and when each stretched past 15 minutes, it was obvious Mankind couldn't win. But with the series tied at three, Mankind refused to do anything but brawl in match seven. Bret brawled back gallantly, but was eventually outsmarted. Mankind played possum as Bret tried to slip on the sharpshooter in the 13th minute. Mankind reversed the sharpshooter, clamped on the mandible claw, and got Bret to submit.

Mankind wins the series, 4-3.

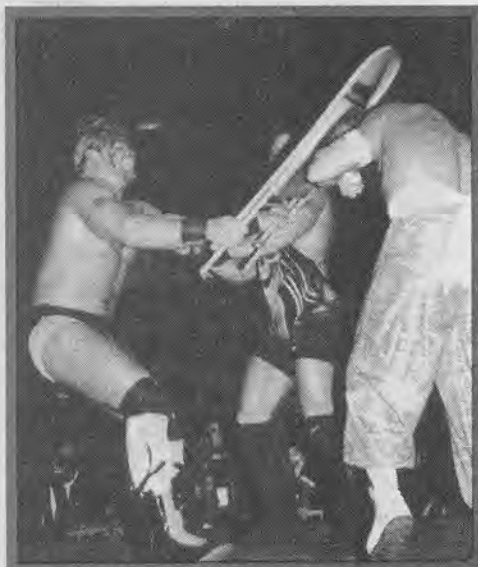


Mankind has had his way with brawler/wrestler types like Ken Shamrock, but what happens when a technical wizard like Bret Hart launches a scientific attack?

SHANE DOUGLAS vs. TAZ



FIRST



ECW champ Shane Douglas uses a chair to fend off Rob Van Dam and Sabu. Unfortunately for "The Franchise," chairs are not available in the computer tournament.

ECW fans might be disappointed that two ECW stars squared off in the first round. Many of them probably would have liked to have seen Shane Douglas and Taz take on top stars from the WWF and WCW. Over the past few years, Douglas and Taz have been two of ECW's best wrestlers. They'd likely fare well elsewhere.

But Douglas prefers to remain in ECW and defend the heavyweight title; besides, injuries kept him from making much career progress in 1998. Taz seems born for ECW. He is one of the toughest wrestlers in the world. The 5'9", 248-pound suplex master has been a fixture there for over half a decade.

Although Taz and Douglas have an ultraviolent history, they recently found themselves on the same side of the fence as rumors circulated

that Taz would replace Bam Bam Bigelow in The Triple Threat. As most ECW fans would agree, it's more exciting when they're on opposite sides.

Injuries figured to be a factor in this series. Taz would concentrate his attack on Douglas's bad elbow. Shane had a variety of Taz injuries to pick on. He has had both neck and shoulder problems. In all likelihood, both would wrestle through pain.

But could Douglas match Taz's arsenal of suplexes? The answer to that question would tell the tale of this matchup.

Douglas, at 6', 240 pounds, relies more on power moves than Taz. Taz needed to strike in quick bursts, while Douglas was going to try to wear down Taz. That proved impossible in the first match. Taz kept moving from the opening bell and attacked Douglas from all angles. He slid to knock Douglas off his feet, then when Douglas worked his way back up, he locked him in a painful armbar. At that point, Taz might have been looking around for a table or chair, but our computer didn't supply any. So Taz executed a T-bone suplex.

Douglas was at a severe disadvantage throughout the match and finally succumbed to a Taz-mission. Shane changed his strategy in the second match and went after Taz. They exchanged suplexes in the opening minute, then settled in for a long battle. Taz scored with a Samoan drop with 14 minutes gone, but Douglas got right back up and worked over Taz's shoulder. Shane

scored with a series of suplexes and got the pin at 15:11.

The rest of the series went back and forth. Taz won his second match with a katahajimi (Taz-mission) at 18:32. Douglas worked on Taz's neck and shoulder throughout the first 10 minutes of the fourth match and got the pin at 11:34. Taz went on top, 3-2, with a belly-to-back suplex and pin combination at 16:43.

They key moment came at 14:00 of the sixth match, when Douglas missed with a clothesline from the top rope, then ran into a rare clothesline by Taz. The two brawled for a few minutes before Douglas missed with a roundhouse right. Taz grabbed Shane's arm and locked on the Taz-mission. Douglas tapped out at 17:06.

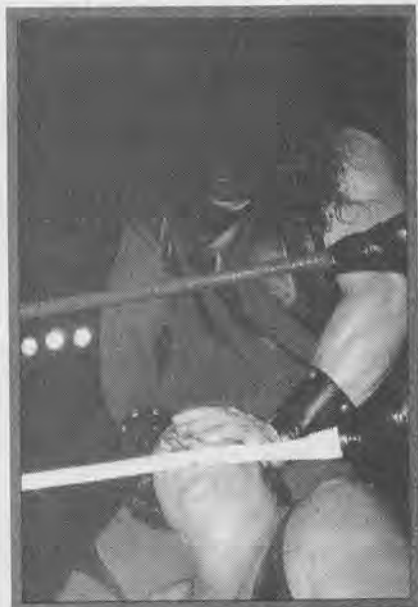
Taz wins the series, 4-2.



Douglas may be the ECW champ, but in our tourney, Taz figured to have an advantage over him because of his vast repertoire of suplexes.

"DIAMOND" DALLAS PAGE vs. KANE

ROUND



Kane is a methodical, plodding wrestler who uses slow, deliberate movements to inflict punishment on opponents. Here he slowly wrenches the bloody head of Jerry Lawler.

Over the past year, "Diamond" Dallas Page has proven to be one of the most well-rounded wrestlers in the world. The former U.S. champion has wrestled mat technicians such as Bret Hart, big brawlers like The Giant, and capable hybrids such as Scott Hall. The INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament '99, however, didn't figure to be Page's speed. He relies on adrenaline rushes and loves wrestling men he hates.

But Kane? A WWF superstar whom Page had never met? Well, our computer tournament figured to be the ultimate test of Page's ability.

And how about Kane, who over the past year has done little more than wrestle with and against his brother, The Undertaker? True, he

did win the WWF World and tag team titles, but those wins were tainted, and none of his reigns lasted long. Kane has lost to Rocky Maivia, but won battle royals, beaten The Undertaker, but lost in four-way matches. For the first time, really, Kane's wrestling ability would be tested, too.

The contrast between these two big men couldn't be greater. Page likes to come out strong and take advantage of his natural adrenaline rush. Kane starts slowly and builds up steam. Like Undertaker, he often doesn't switch into full gear until he's on the verge of losing. Page has learned to end matches as quickly as possible. After all, if he doesn't, there's a good chance somebody from NWO Hollywood will interfere.

But there's no NWO Hollywood in the INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament '99. Just Page and Kane, head-to-head.

Indeed, Page came out flying in the first match, but he couldn't budge Kane when he attempted an arm-drag. Page backed off and Kane wandered from one corner to the other. Kane clearly wasn't ready to launch an attack, while Page wasn't sure what to do next. Another minute expired before Page stepped up his assault with kicks and punches, then got Kane to the mat with an impressive Russian legsweep.

Page knew better than to go for the pin so early, but Kane refused to play into his hands by counterwrestling.

Instead, Page attacked, while Kane absorbed each blow. This lasted for about three minutes before Kane sat up, grabbed Page by the neck, picked him up, and dropped him to the mat. It was an impressive feat of strength that demoralized DDP.

That one move set the tone for the rest of the series. Kane used a choke-slam to win the first match. Page battled gallantly and won the second match in under six minutes by using a front facelock and a vicious DDT. Kane won the third match in the 10th minute by using a tombstone piledriver after getting up from Page's Diamond cutter. Page evened the series in match four when he followed the Diamond cutter with a pin, but it was *all* Kane the rest of the way. He held off an early attack to win match five with a tombstone, then used his choke-slam in the 11th minute to win the sixth match.

Kane wins the series, 4-2.

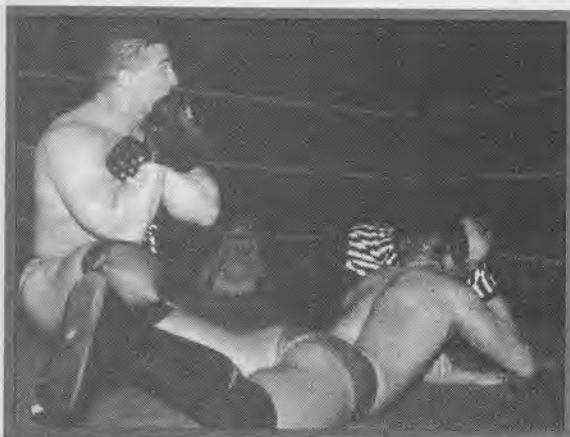


DDP, one of the most versatile wrestlers in the world, can handle any kind of opponent. He needed a well-rounded attack to have a chance in his series with Kane.



KEN SHAMROCK vs. CHRIS JERICO

SECOND



Ken Shamrock's anklelock has gained renown as one of the sport's most painful and successful submission holds. Chris Jericho felt its crushing pain several times in this series.

Shamrock was coming off an easy first-round series, while Jericho had to go the distance to dispatch Konnan. This fascinating WWF vs. WCW battle figured to go the distance. Would arrogance get the better of either? Shamrock and Jericho both love mocking their opponents. Would they mock each other, or just get down to business and wrestle?

Shamrock came out strong in match one and brawled with Jericho for the first two minutes. Jericho, surprisingly, brawled back, and with two minutes gone, scored with a reverse kick that nailed Shamrock in the chin. At this point, Shamrock realized he wouldn't be able to beat Jericho early, and the two wrestlers settled in for a long battle.

With six minutes gone, Shamrock had reached the point at which he usually goes into a lull. Jericho started stringing moves together, but Shamrock survived into the

13th minute, then seemed to catch his second wind. Jericho whipped Shamrock into the ropes, but Shamrock came off with a cross bodyblock that knocked Jericho to the mat. Shamrock clamped on a chinlock. Jericho reached the ropes to force a break.

With 15 minutes gone, Jericho's belly-to-back suplex resulted in the first two-count of the match.

Jericho tried to lock on a lion tamer, but Shamrock stood up out of it, then came off the ropes with a reverse sidekick, stunning Jericho. Shamrock, seizing the opportunity, scored with a DDT, then covered Jericho for the pin and a 1-0 lead.

Shamrock, confident after his hard-earned victory, mocked Jericho's long hair at the start of match two. Jericho shut him up with a series of elbows to the face, then a belly-to-back suplex that sent Shamrock thundering to the mat. Shamrock never recovered. Jericho dominated for 12 minutes and weakened Shamrock with brawling and aerial tactics. Jericho subdued his foe with the lion tamer at 12:44.

Shamrock was resilient. Although he was again dominated in the first five minutes, he survived his usual midmatch lull, took the third match into the 17th minute, and won when Jericho tapped out to an anklelock.

Shamrock refused to break the hold for a full 30 seconds after the final bell. Jericho limped into the ring for the fourth match and kept away from Shamrock for the opening five minutes before launching his attack. Suddenly, Jericho wasn't limping at all; he had been playing possum. Shamrock was stunned and couldn't recover. He submitted to a lion tamer at 9:29.

That turned out to be Jericho's last stand. Shamrock attacked aggressively from the start of the fifth match, weakened Jericho with armbars, leglocks, and two belly-to-belly suplexes, then won with an anklelock at 6:41. The sixth match went Jericho's way for a while—until Shamrock knocked him to the mat with a bodyblock from the ropes, then a DDT, then the pin at 10:01.

Shamrock wins the series, 4-2.



Chris Jericho possesses a lethal finisher of his own, the lion tamer. Jericho used it to tame Shamrock more than once.

THE UNDERTAKER vs. KEVIN NASH

ROUND

Flashback: WWF Royal Rumble, January 21, 1996. Bret Hart is defending his WWF World title against The Undertaker. Undertaker has the "Hitman" pinned following a tombstone piledriver, but Diesel pulls the referee out of the ring and Hart gets disqualified. By the time Undertaker and Diesel meet at WrestleMania XII, their hatred for another has become so strong that they can't wait to tear into each other. But Diesel's arrogance costs him, and Undertaker uses his tombstone to score the pin. A few months later, Diesel leaves for WCW and starts using his real name, Kevin Nash.

And so they finally meet again ... by computer.

Nash: 7', 356 pounds. Undertaker: 6'9", 328 pounds. Worlds collide.

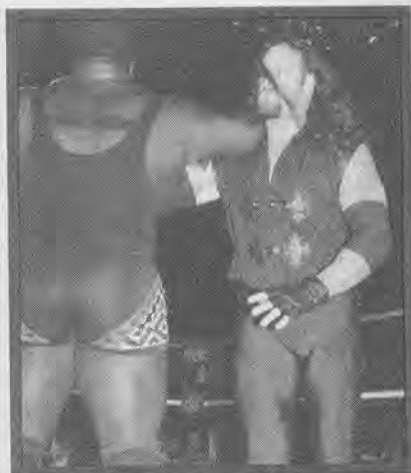


Before Kevin Nash went to WCW, he and Undertaker were bitter rivals in the WWF. Nash never got a chance to avenge his loss at WrestleMania XII ... until now.

We didn't expect a fast-paced series and didn't get one. We expected brawls and got them. The bell rang for match one and Nash attacked. Punches and forearms, however, had no effect on Undertaker, who rather than battling back, simply absorbed the punishment and allowed Nash to weaken himself. With four minutes gone, Undertaker unleashed his attack, and for the next four minutes, the two giants exchanged blows that would have destroyed weaker men.

The action spilled outside the ring and Nash slammed Undertaker's head onto the steel steps, then into the ringpost. Undertaker acted as if he wasn't even hurt. Nash didn't know what to do next. He took the match back into the ring and resumed a kicking and punching attack. Then he went for the power bomb, but Undertaker stood firm. Undertaker responded with a standing clothesline, then another. Undertaker went for the pin, Nash rolled out at two. Undertaker choked Nash. The two wrestlers got up. Undertaker got ready for his tombstone piledriver. Nash grabbed 'Taker's legs, toppled him to the mat, and scored a shocking pin.

Match two featured more of the same. Nash tried to overpower Undertaker early. Undertaker fought back. Nash flooded Undertaker with a clothesline, then shocked him with a choke-slam. Undertaker sat up at the count of two. Nash realized he was in trouble. His choke-slam hadn't hurt Undertaker. Both got up. Undertaker drove Nash face-first into the mat. Then he lifted Nash for a tombstone and got the pin.



The Undertaker's choke-slam is one of the most feared maneuvers in the sport, but how would it work against a taller opponent such as Kevin Nash?

Nash tried to turn up the heat in match three. Undertaker refused to wrestle at any pace but his own. Nash had three two-counts before Undertaker scored with a flying clothesline. While Nash lay on the mat, Undertaker walked the ropes. Nash reached over, shook the bottom rope, and sent Undertaker falling to the mat. Nash power-bombed 'Taker for a 2-1 series lead.

Undertaker won the fourth match with a tombstone piledriver. Nash won the fifth after overcoming a rare early assault by Undertaker. Undertaker survived into the 16th minute of the sixth match and won with a series of clotheslines. It came down to match seven, a battle of wills. Nash outwilled Undertaker and won in the 13th minute when he blocked Undertaker's tombstone and twice power-bombed him. Nash scored the pin at 13:01 and gained his computer revenge.

Nash wins the series, 4-3.



BILL GOLDBERG vs. MANKIND

SECOND



Goldberg's overwhelming intensity is a great asset, but intensity counts for very little in our tournament. Besides, Mankind doesn't scare that easily.

A quarterfinal matchup between two of the hottest wrestlers in the world looked intriguing. Could Mankind lure Goldberg into a brawl, or would Goldberg keep his distance and attack Mankind in short bursts? Goldberg had an easy time in the first round, sweeping Big Bossman, while Mankind needed seven matches to beat Bret Hart. Nonetheless, stamina didn't figure to be a factor, because both men like to finish matches in 10 minutes or less.

Goldberg faced all types of opponents in his first year as a wrestler, but he has never fought a brawler quite as maniacal as Mankind. Mankind went right after Goldberg in match one and tried to turn the series into a barroom brawl. Arms and legs were flying as Mankind concentrated his attack on Goldberg's head. Goldberg, on the other hand, kept pushing off, and

finally tackled Mankind from half-way across the ring.

The first match ended in the seventh minute, when Goldberg ducked Mankind's clothesline, then turned around and speared him to the mat for the pin. The second match followed the same pattern as the first: Mankind went all-out at the start, Goldberg held off the violent assault; Mankind tried to bully Goldberg into the ropes, but Goldberg fought back, sent him sprawling to the mat with a sidekick, and scored with a jackhammer to finish him.

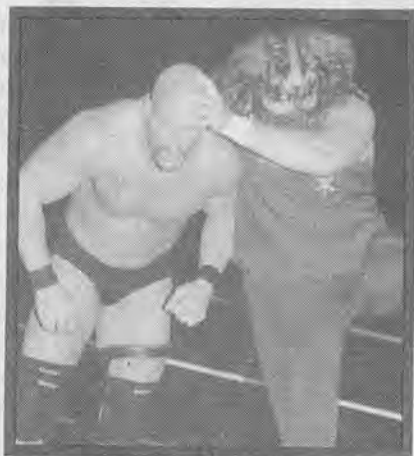
Trailing 2-0, Mankind became a desperate wrestler in the third match. As anyone who has seen him knows, Mankind is extremely dangerous when he becomes desperate. He pounded on Goldberg with forearms, kneed him in the groin, then stunned him with chops to the midsection. Mankind buried Goldberg's head in his armpit, then worked on his forehead with quick punches that opened up a gash on Goldberg's head. Infuriated by the sight of his own blood, Goldberg pushed Mankind away, then charged at him from halfway across the ring and sent him flying to the mat. Mankind got up. Goldberg dropkicked him. Mankind got up again. Goldberg got set for the spear. Mankind ducked away, then turned around and clamped on the mandible claw. Goldberg passed out. Mankind had closed the gap to 2-1.

Goldberg, not wanting to let Mankind build momentum, blocked and tackled in the opening minutes of the fourth match. Mankind tried

to reverse Goldberg's momentum, but the former NFL player kept driving Mankind to the mat and into the ringpost. Mankind grabbed his back in pain after one particularly hard shot, then toppled to the mat after a Goldberg forearm. Two minutes later, Goldberg slammed Mankind, then clamped on a leglock. Mankind submitted at 5:28.

Mankind couldn't reverse his fortunes in the fifth match. He brawled, but his shots had little effect on the much stronger Goldberg. Mankind hurt Goldberg with two clotheslines, then saw his mandible claw blocked. Goldberg lifted Mankind by the biceps, dropped him to the mat, then floored him with a standing clothesline. Goldberg shouted, "Get up, get up!" and Mankind obliged. Goldberg speared him to the mat again; the series was over three seconds later.

Goldberg wins the series, 4-1.



Mankind doesn't possess a sculpted body like Goldberg, but he has proven his toughness by battling top stars like Steve Austin. He needed plenty of toughness in this series.

TAZ vs. KANE

ROUND

It's the kind of match that makes wrestling purists cringe, simply because they realize that even though Taz is one of the most skilled wrestlers in the world, he doesn't stand much of a chance against a man who is much taller, much larger, and much stronger. There's a reason amateurs wrestle in distinct weight classes: Most smaller men can't beat most big men.

Then again, Taz isn't like most smaller men. The 5'9", 248-pound dynamo has an endless array of suplexes in his repertoire and is the master of the Taz-mission. Taz likes to gloat that size means nothing to him. Indeed, he has beaten Bam Bam Bigelow, one of the biggest men in the sport. Still, he is far more comfortable battling smaller, skilled wrestlers such as Sabu.

Of course, most of Kane's oppo-

nents have been power merchants. Sure, he has tested himself against the talented Steve Austin, but Taz is in another category altogether when it comes to stringing together moves and keeping opponents off-balance.

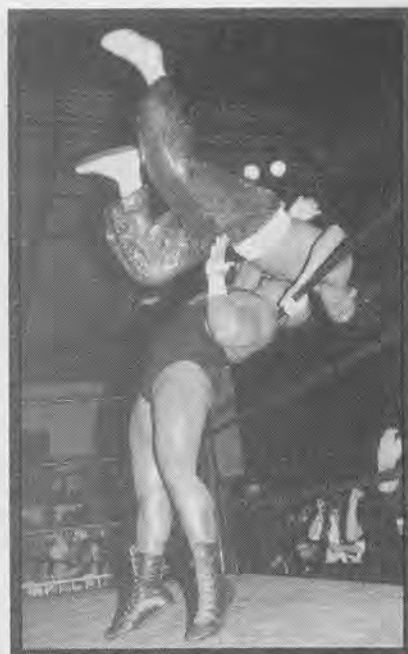
Could Taz defy the adage that a great small man can't beat a great big man? Let's find out.

Taz knew he had to keep Kane moving and off-balance, so he attacked from all angles in the first five minutes of the opening match. He attacked Kane's back, then tried to drop him with a dropkick. Four of them had Kane stumbling, but he refused to fall. Taz knew it was useless to kick and punch Kane, but he was starting to realize that Kane wouldn't wrestle with him. And if Kane wouldn't counterwrestle, then Taz couldn't lure him into traps.

Taz couldn't suplex Kane. He couldn't lift him. He locked on an armbar, but it had no effect on Kane. And Kane refused to be whipped into the ropes. With seven minutes gone in the first match, this much became clear: Taz had almost no chance.

Taz is a strong man for his size, but he was helpless when Kane got to work with forearms and elbows. Finally, after only nine minutes, Kane lifted Taz by the throat and choke-slammed him. Kane lifted Taz again, choke-slammed him again. Lifted him again, choke-slammed him again. After the third time, he made the cover for the pin.

There really was no hope for Taz. Kane slid out of a Samoan drop in match two and executed a tombstone piledriver for the pin. In

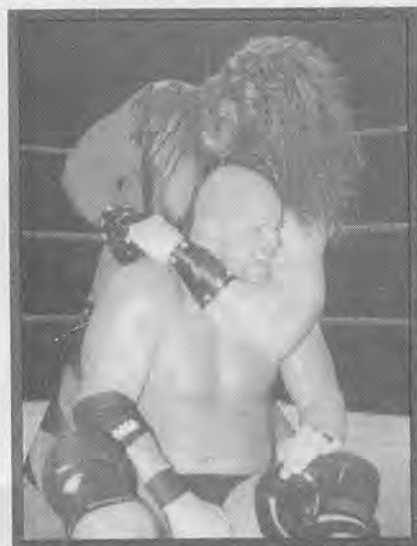


Taz gives up a lot of size to Kane, but no one can question his heart—or wrestling ability. Taz' ECW wars with Sabu have been intense, but they couldn't prepare him for a foe as big as Kane.

the third match, Kane, realizing Taz has suffered several concussions, pounded on his shoulders and neck until Taz dizzily stumbled around the ring, then fell to the mat. Kane simply covered him for the pin.

Taz tried to mount some offense in the fourth match, but there was nothing he could do against this immovable object. In fact, Kane wouldn't move. He wouldn't chase Taz. He just stood there and waited for his opening, which came with 10 minutes gone. Taz tried to lift Kane for a T-bone suplex, but Kane held his ground, then choke-slammed him. Kane dropped an elbow into Taz's throat, then covered him for the pin. He was in the semifinals.

Kane wins the series, 4-0.

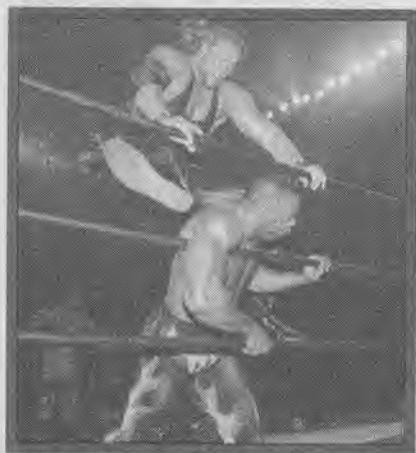


You'll know when Kane grabs hold of you. Just ask Steve Austin, who knows just how punishing the big man can be. Size was Kane's greatest weapon in his series with Taz.



KEN SHAMROCK vs. KEVIN NASH

SEMIF



Kevin Nash comes in for a landing on Booker T. Nash varied his attack against Shamrock, but his assault included bone-crunching maneuvers like this.

Coming off his grueling quarterfinal-round victory over The Undertaker, Nash figured to have a psychological let-down against Shamrock. Although Shamrock is one of the finest wrestlers in the WWF, he is nearly a foot shorter than Nash and didn't seem to have any chance if he chose to brawl. That was a distinct possibility, because Shamrock will wrestle anyone on their terms. Brawling against Nash would be a recipe for disaster.

That's exactly what Shamrock tried to do in the first match. He attacked Nash with kicks and punches but barely budged him. Nash, as if laughing at Shamrock, clotheslined him to the mat, then pointed derisively at his fallen foe. Shamrock changed his strategy. He scored with a reverse sidekick, then locked on an armbar. Nash, who isn't a bad counter wrestler, fought his way out and kept his dis-

tance from Shamrock for the next four minutes.

That proved to be a mistake, because Shamrock tends to go into a lull between five and 10 minutes. With 11 minutes gone, Shamrock was back in early-match form ... and again trying to brawl with Nash. Both wrestlers were making critical mistakes, but the last mistake was made by Nash, who incorrectly thought he had Shamrock set up for a power bomb. He couldn't lift Shamrock, who whipped him into the ropes, caught him with a knee to the groin, then clamped on the anklelock. Nash submitted at 14:28.

It was a stunning victory for Shamrock, who suddenly had confidence. *Too much* confidence. He mocked Nash at the outset of match two; Nash responded by pounding him with forearms. Nash's attack became relentless. He whipped Shamrock into the ropes and met him with a forearm. Shamrock got up and Nash powerslammed him. Shamrock got up again and Nash dropped him neck-first onto the top rope. Shamrock didn't get up this time. Nash power-bombed him and scored the pin at 3:53.

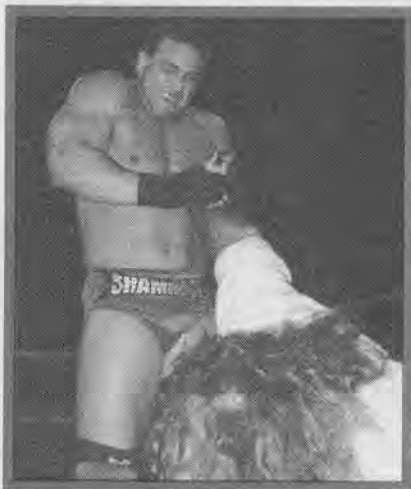
Both wrestlers were now only three wins away from the finals. For Shamrock, it might as well have been 100. Nash again came out with a power attack in the third match and Shamrock was helpless to fight back. This time, there was no Shamrock arrogance. Nash let him last into the seventh minute, then rocked him with a choke-slam that could be felt throughout the building. Nash covered him for a 2-1 lead.

Shamrock tried to wrestle ag-

gressively when match four started, but he foolishly went for a DDT when Nash had barely been weakened. Nash pounded Shamrock's shoulders with forearms, then lifted him by the neck and slammed him to the mat. Shamrock's body shook. Nash dropped an elbow into Shamrock's gut, then another. Rather than finish off Shamrock quickly, Nash figured he'd win matches four and five at the same time by physically destroying Shamrock. He worked on Shamrock's arms and legs and clamped on an anklelock of his own. Shamrock submitted, but Nash wouldn't break the hold for another minute.

That's why match five was over before it started. Shamrock could barely move, so Nash went for the kill early. Three clotheslines, then a DDT, then a power bomb. It was over after 4:44. Nash was in the finals.

Nash wins the series, 4-1.



Ken Shamrock uses a wristlock to wear down Mankind. He has had more success with his anklelock, but in match four of this series, he had that hold used against him!

BILL GOLDBERG vs. KANE

INALS

Not many men made a bigger impact on the sport in 1998 than Bill Goldberg and Kane. Goldberg was a dominant WCW World champion. Kane was always in the middle of things, whether he was setting his half-brother, The Undertaker, on fire, battling Steve Austin for the World title, or teaming with Undertaker to steal the World title.

Goldberg vs. Kane. Other than Goldberg-Austin, could there have been a more appealing WWF vs. WCW match?

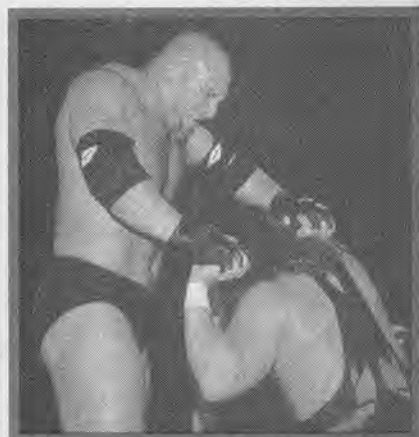
Goldberg was the aggressor early in match one. He rammed his shoulder into Kane as if he was trying to knock down a brick wall. Kane held his ground until Goldberg ran at him from halfway across the ring and knocked him over the top rope and onto the floor. Goldberg followed him out. Kane held out his right arm and grabbed Goldberg's throat. Goldberg resisted a choke-slam by kneeing Kane in the gut. The two separated and

slowly returned to the ring.

The pattern of this series had been set: Goldberg started strong, Kane fought back, then they traded the advantage for the next few minutes. Kane, who likes to sit back and wait for his opportunity, attacked more than usual, surprising Goldberg with his intensity. Kane won the first match when he blocked Goldberg's tackle, then choke-slammed him. Goldberg won the second match with a side-kick/jackhammer combination. The third match went to Goldberg in much the same way: Kane thought he had Goldberg set up for a tombstone, but Goldberg resisted, then speared him.

Neither man has ever had his stamina tested, but in this battle, it figured to be only a matter of time. Match three was the marathon: a 30-minute brawl in which Kane escaped from six two-counts, Goldberg from four. Kane blasted Goldberg's back and had him doubled over in pain, but Goldberg battled back. With 28 minutes gone, Kane again blasted Goldberg's back, then executed his tombstone for the pin.

Goldberg knew he was in trouble. His strength had been matched by Kane in the first three bouts. Goldberg got into bigger trouble in the fourth match when Kane caught him off the ropes, then choke-slammed him. Goldberg got up, but



Bill Goldberg easily overpowers Sting, but he was surprised to find that Kane was just as strong as he was. Goldberg was tested like never before by Kane.

Kane choke-slammed him again and took a 3-1 lead.

Goldberg, in serious trouble, was brave. He won the fifth match with a leglock submission, the sixth with a jackhammer.

The seventh match featured seven near-pins by Goldberg and nine by Kane. With 13 minutes gone, Goldberg charged at Kane, who moved out of the way. Goldberg's momentum took him into the ringpost. Kane stalked him and was greeted by a knee to the groin. Bent over in pain and gasping for air, Kane got lucky: Goldberg was sweating so profusely that he couldn't lift Kane. Kane fell to the mat, Goldberg fell to the mat, and Kane grabbed Goldberg by the neck. In an incredible display of strength, Kane—his knees on the mat—choke-slammed Goldberg and fell on top of him for the pin. The pre-tournament favorite was history.

Kane wins the series, 4-3.



Kane could wipe Rocky Maivia out with one mighty elbow if he wanted to, but Goldberg wouldn't fall as easily to such a blow. Kane's best-of-seven series with Goldberg produced unparalleled brutality.



KEVIN NASH vs. KANE

FINALS

Kevin Nash is a big man who loves wrestling big men. He showed that in several matches last year with The Giant.

Kane is a big man who loves wrestling big men. Although he failed to beat his half-brother, The Undertaker, in most of their bouts, he looked good in a lot of four-way brawls.

Our computer did not take into account mental letdowns, so Kane wouldn't be at a disadvantage coming off his surprising semifinal victory over Goldberg. Nash had the

easier route to the final, with breezes over Reckless Youth and Ken Shamrock sandwiched around a grueling quarterfinal-round victory over The Undertaker. Nash was 12-4 in the tournament; Kane, whose only easy series was a sweep of Taz, was 12-5. Nash, a former INSIDE WRESTLING Computer Tournament champion, lost to Vader in the 1995 finals.

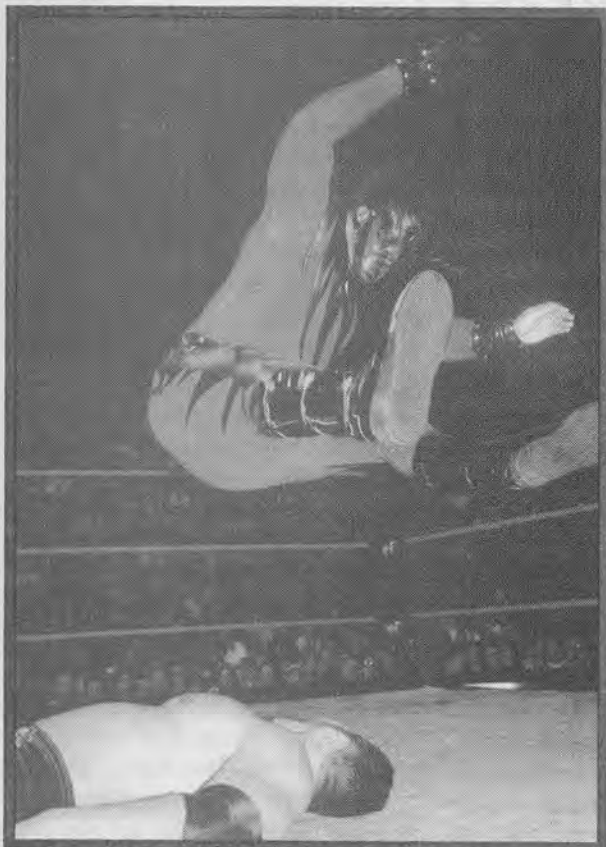
Like in 1995, the tournament came down to power vs. power and size vs. size.

Wary of each other, both wres-

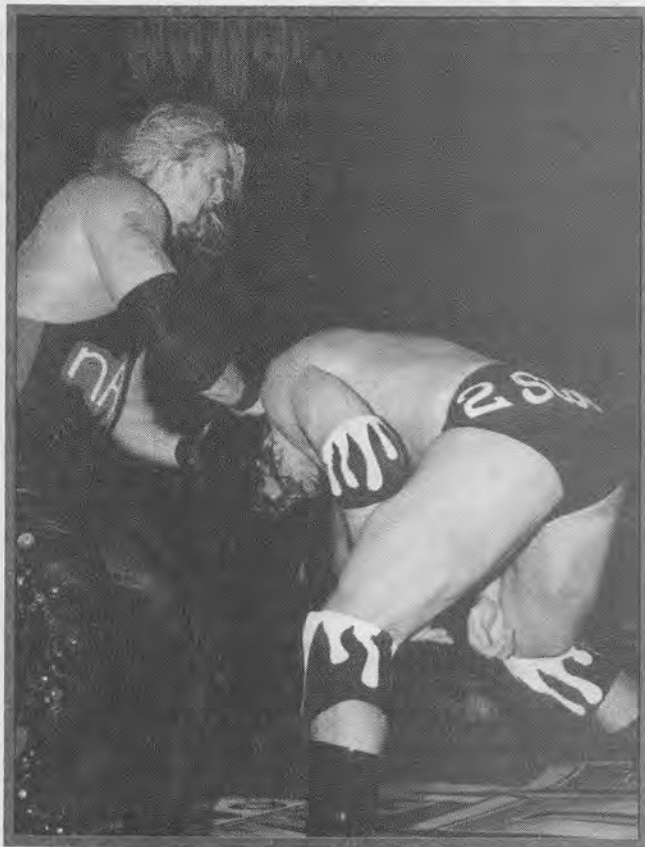
tlers were reluctant to attack in the opening match and didn't make their first contact until 2:20 was gone. That's when Kane approached Nash and tried to grab him by the neck. Nash responded with a shot to the gut.

The action picked up. Kane scored with several kidney punches, while Nash beat on Kane's back with elbowsmashes. Nash came off the ropes for a clothesline, but Kane blocked it and slammed him to the mat. Then Kane threw Nash

(Continued on page 47)



Kane borrows a move from Hollywood Hogan. Kane's power attack, while not sophisticated, is effective. "The Big Red Machine" felt right at home slugging it out with Kevin Nash.



"Big Sexy" works over Scott Hall, but fighting Kane was a different story altogether. Nash is familiar with Hall's tendencies but didn't always know what to expect from Kane.

KEVIN NASH

Computer
Tournament
'99 Finalist



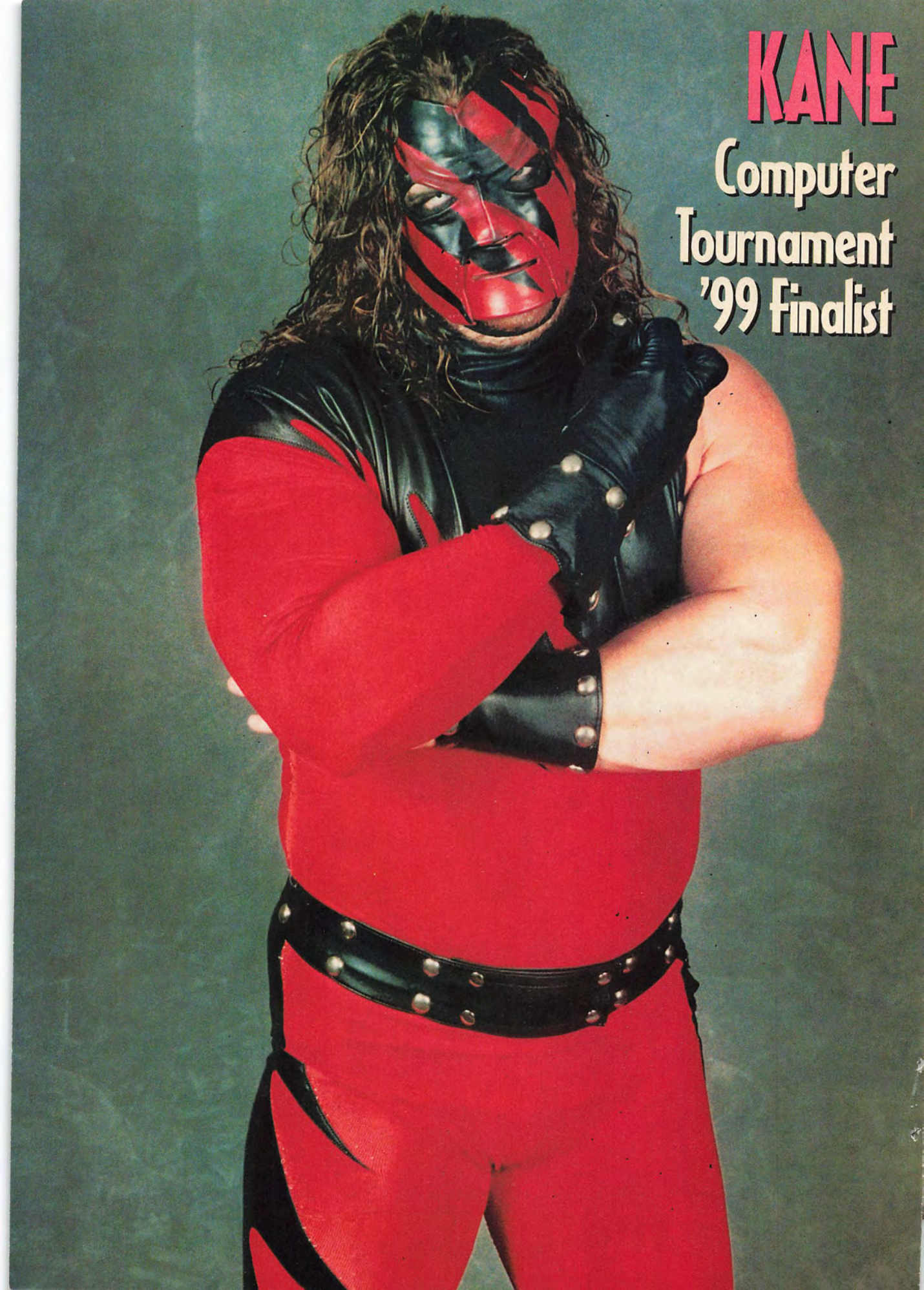


Computer Tournament '99

ACTION CLOSEUP

We've seen it before. A man musters enough courage to stand toe-to-toe with the mighty Kane and take his best shots. How does Kane usually respond? By standing there as if nothing was happening ... as if the blows were having no effect whatsoever on him. Not many men have a right hand strong enough to knock Kane off his feet, but Kevin Nash's right hand is as hard as anyone's. And once he has you down, he knows what to do to put you away. Kane has absorbed many a tombstone piledriver from his half-brother, The Undertaker, and gotten back up. Nash's jackknife power bomb, however, took a little too much out of him.



A full-body photograph of the professional wrestler Kane. He is wearing his iconic black and red mask, which features a large 'X' design. He has long, dark, wavy hair. His outfit consists of a red long-sleeved shirt, a black leather vest, and a black leather belt with silver studs. He is also wearing black leather gloves with silver studs. He is posing with his arms crossed, looking directly at the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

KANE

Computer
Tournament
'99 Finalist



Kane, who is accustomed to bullying smaller opponents like "Stone-Cold," got a taste of Nash's power early in the series—and fought back twice as hard!



Nash's strategy was basic, as he attacked Kane with torturous holds like the one he uses on Sting here. It was all "Big Sexy" needed to dispatch Kane and win the Computer Tournament.

over the top rope. Nash struggled to get back into the ring. Kane met him with a standing clothesline, then lifted him by the neck and finished him with a choke-slam.

Down but not out, Nash wrestled bravely in match two. This time, he came out strong and stunned Kane with forearms that knocked him to the mat. Kane, refusing to be intimidated, got back up and stared down Nash. The two went punch for punch for nearly two minutes, then attacked each other relentlessly for the next 10. With 13 minutes gone and both wrestlers wearing down, Kane gambled: He rebounded off the ropes and tried to grab Nash but was met by a knee to the groin. Kane was doubled over in pain as Nash DDT'd him for the pin, evening the series at one.

The two wrestlers settled in for a long series. Match three was the ultimate: Nash scored with three power bombs, but Kane got up all three times. Kane twice choke-

slammed Nash, then scored with a tombstone piledriver, but Nash got up. Kane took a 2-1 series lead with his second tombstone at 8:15, but Nash had proven his resiliency.

Nash and Kane took their war outside the ring several times in match four. Kane battered Nash against the ringpost. Nash bloodied Kane's mouth when he slammed him against the edge of the ring. Kane bashed Nash's head against the ringpost and opened a cut when Nash's cheek struck an exposed bolt. With 9:33 gone, Nash came off the ropes for a clothesline. Kane dropped to the mat. Nash's blood dripped onto Kane's prone body. Nash dropped a knee, then hooked Kane's leg for the pin.

There was more blood in match five. The big men battered each other with forearms and elbows. Kane tried to slow the pace in the opening five minutes, but Nash was relentless, willing to take four shots to land one. Kane's eyes glazed

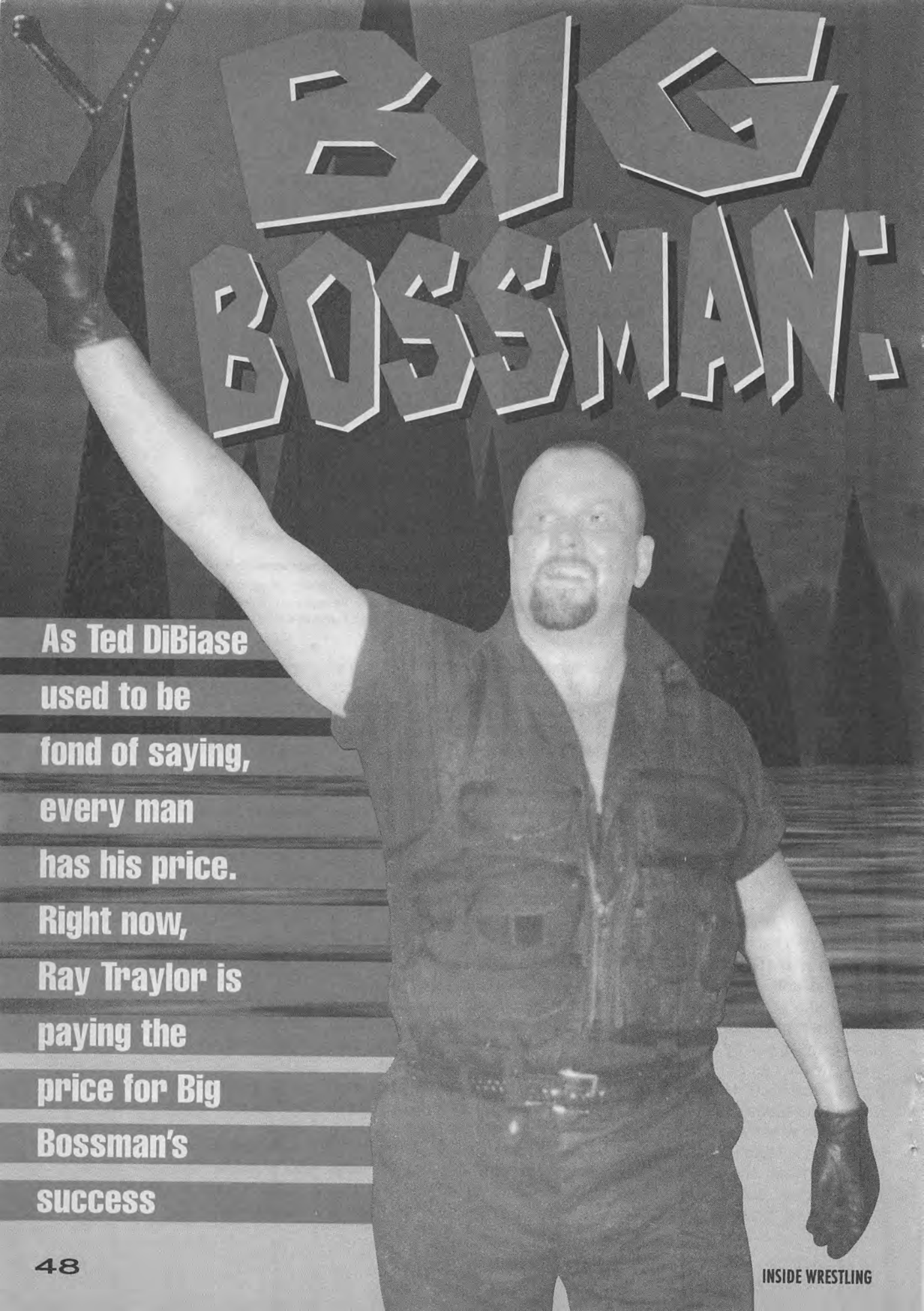
over. Nash continued his assault. With six minutes gone, Kane was exhausted. Nash rocked him with a flying clothesline. Kane got back up and tried to choke-slam Nash, but Nash pushed off, then whipped Kane into the ropes. Nash tried to squeeze the life out of Kane with a bearhug. Finally, Kane submitted.

Match six: more of the same. Nash bled from his forehead and right cheek after Kane banged his leg against the guardrail. Kane limped back into the ring and was met by a series of forearms, then a DDT. Kane laid on the mat. Nash went for the pin. Kane lifted up at two. Nash went for another cover. Kane lifted up at two. Nash picked up Kane, lifted him above his head, then power-bombed him. It was a sensational ending to a sensational series.

For the second time, Nash was our Computer Tournament champion.

Nash wins the series and the tournament, 4-2.

BIG BOSSMAN.



As Ted DiBiase
used to be
fond of saying,
every man
has his price.
Right now,
Ray Traylor is
paying the
price for Big
Bossman's
success

Vinnie Mac Saved His Career.... But Ruined His Life!

By deciding to follow the wishes of Vince McMahon and bully people like Steve Austin, Big Bossman (below left) enjoys being in the spotlight. Last we heard from him in WCW, where he used his real name, Ray Traylor (below right), he was a mid-carder. He has one man to thank for his career resurrection.

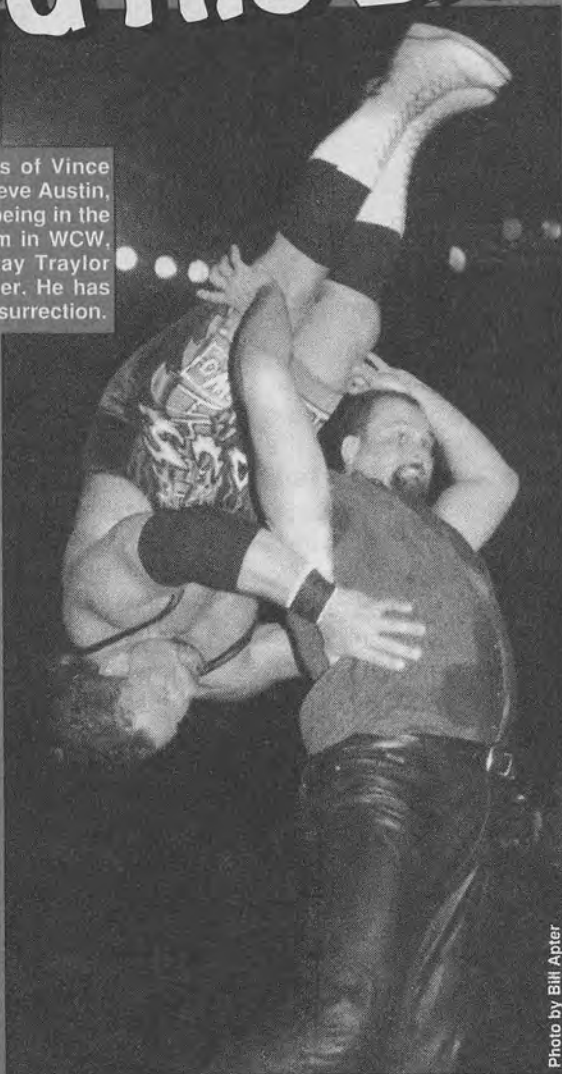
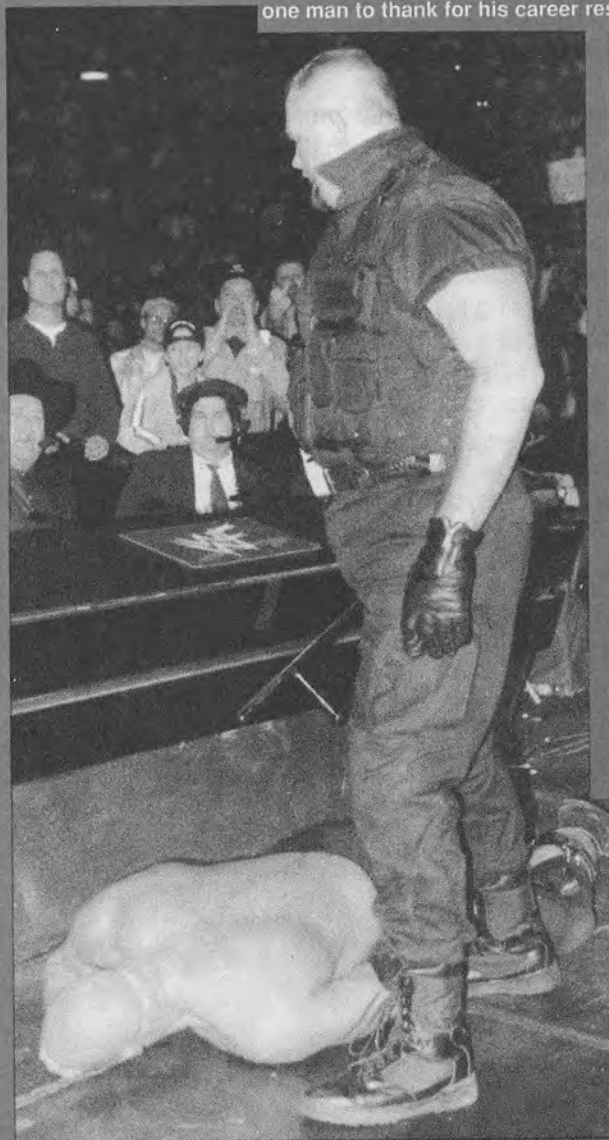


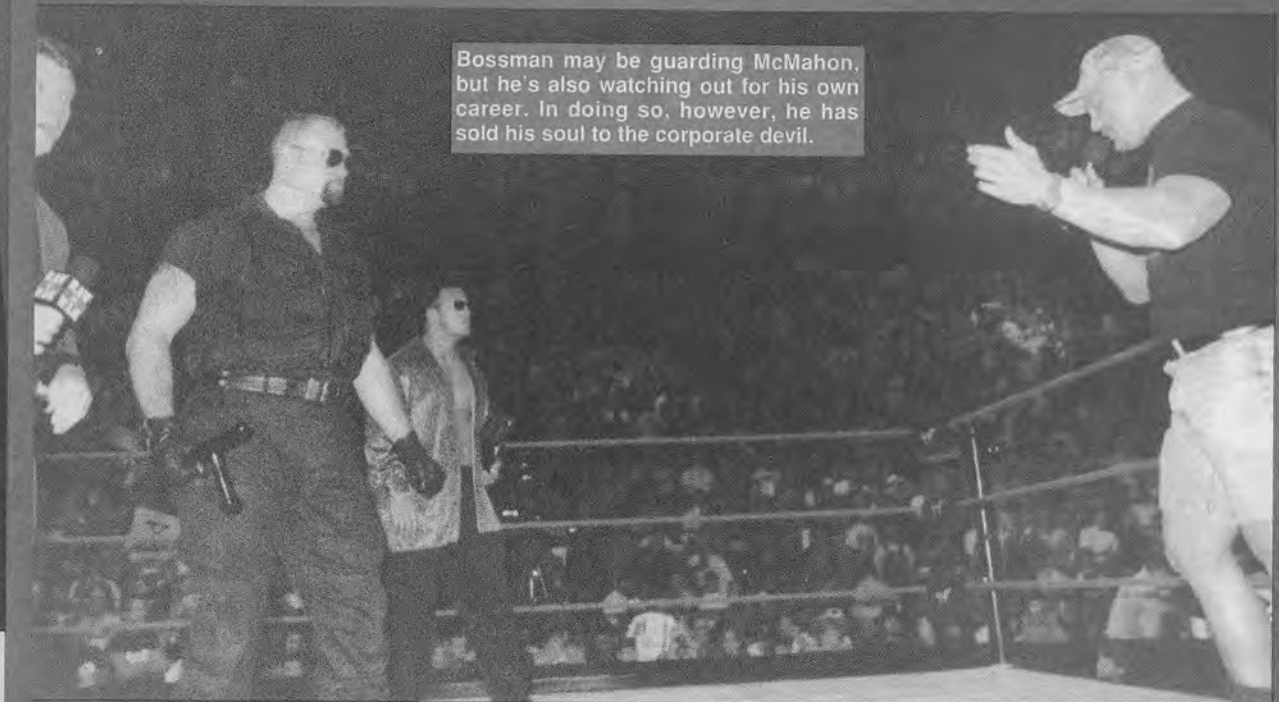
Photo by Bill Apter

By Bryan Ethier

THE AGE-OLD question goes like this: What's in a name? The answer, for some professional wrestlers, goes like this: not much.

Consider the case of Big Bossman, who certainly is big, but just as certainly is nobody's boss. While this burly brawler surely knows that with one crack of his knuckles he can crack the spine of a foe, Bossman also somehow figures he actually is someone's boss in the WWF.

Bossman may be guarding McMahon, but he's also watching out for his own career. In doing so, however, he has sold his soul to the corporate devil.



What a fallacy! Bossman is no more a boss than a man is the king of his castle when his wife is paying the mortgage. In this case, the king of the WWF mansion is biggest boss Vince McMahon, who pays the WWF bills, hires all the help, and discharges those butlers and domestic servants who dare defy his rule.

Amazingly, Bossman has yet to smell what the big boss is cookin'.

"If you know the story of Bossman, you get the impression Vince McMahon has saved the man's career," said Kevin Kelly. "On the surface that may appear to be the case. But you wonder what price Bossman is paying."

An explanation of Kelly's evaluation: In his prior wrestling incarnations, the 6'6", 310-pound native of Cobb County, Georgia, worked as both a bodyguard and a wrestler. In fact, during his most recent tenure with WCW, Bossman compet-

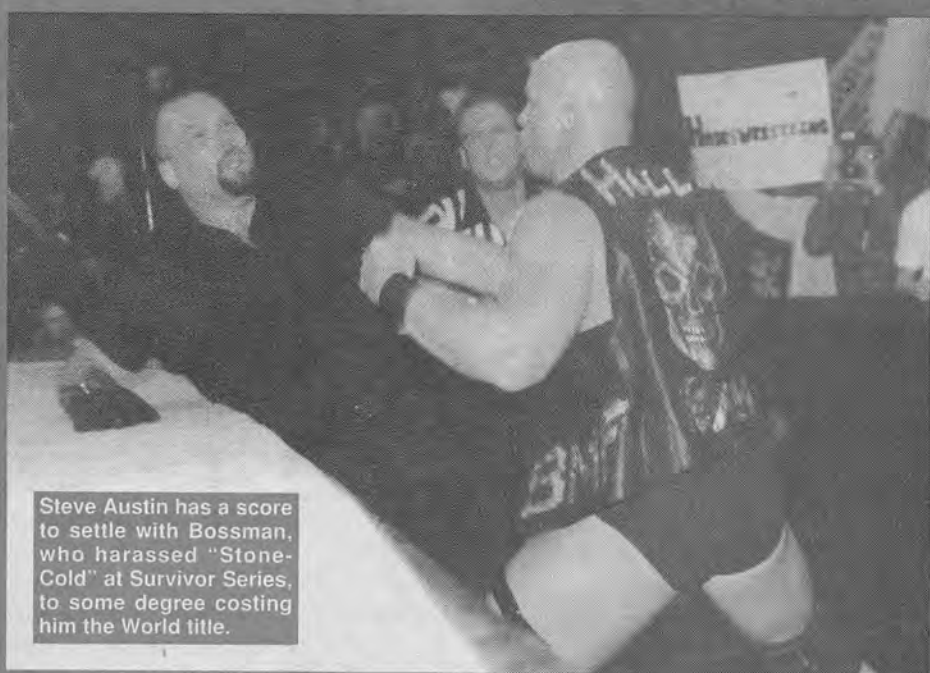
ed under his real name, Ray Traylor. But by the time Traylor arrived in WCW, he had already established himself as a bodyguard to be respected. He got his start in 1986 in the NWA, working as Jim Cornette's bodyguard and using the name Big Bubba Rogers.

Cornette and others soon discovered that Bubba liked to do more

than protect his charge; he enjoyed mixing it up. His rough style earned him a spot in the squared circle, and in April 1987, Traylor/Bubba defeated One Man Gang for the UWF heavyweight belt.

At that stage, it appeared Ray Traylor had a bright future.

After losing his title to Steve Williams, Traylor returned to the



Steve Austin has a score to settle with Bossman, who harassed "Stone Cold" at Survivor Series, to some degree costing him the World title.

NWA, but quickly grew tired of the bodyguard job, so he hopped on the WWF Express in search of fame and fortune. It was then, under the direction of a new manager, Slick, that Big Bossman earned his reputation as a fearsome, brutal antagonist. And during his first WWF tour, Ray Traylor introduced the wrestling community to his nightstick.

Before leaving the WWF, Bossman became a fan favorite. In 1993, he left the WWF and joined WCW after a brief tour on the independent circuit. He wrestled under the names The Boss and The Guardian Angel. Although some fans took to him, Traylor never found his niche in WCW, and he left the federation in 1997. He resurfaced in the WWF a year later ... after receiving a phone call from federation kingpin Vince McMahon.

It was a phone call he desperately needed to take.

Only in leaving WCW did Ray Traylor realize that big is good only if it is bad, and bad is good when you have a corporation supporting you. Traylor determined he had that support from McMahon, who recognized what a colossal ally he had in Traylor. So Ray took the bait. He met with Vince McMahon and bought into the idea of being McMahon's bodyguard. The money was good, and the work relatively easy. What could be better?

McMahon's master plan, his Corporate Plan, made sense to Ray Traylor, because he was desperate to become somebody again. McMahon used that big black nightstick to turn Traylor's life from a dull black-and-white existence into a shiny, brilliantly illuminated technicolor extravaganza. Boss McMahon dressed his protege in black, making him look evil, dark, and frightening. And when he returned that magic nightstick to Traylor, the transformation was complete. Ray Traylor once again was psycho-guard. Bossman was alive, Ray Traylor a mere memory.

"I don't know what that jackass of a totem pole is doing in the

WWF, but I'm gonna knock some of his teeth out if he stays in my face," said "Stone-Cold" Steve Austin.

Indeed, if anyone has a score to settle with Bossman, it's Austin. During the Survivor Series World title tournament, Bossman, acting under McMahon's direction, harassed not only Austin, but all three of Rocky Maivia's opponents. That Maivia ended up beating Mankind for the vacant WWF title was no mere coincidence.

But such is the new life Traylor leads, to carry out McMahon's orders like a Mafioso button man. Is it worth it?

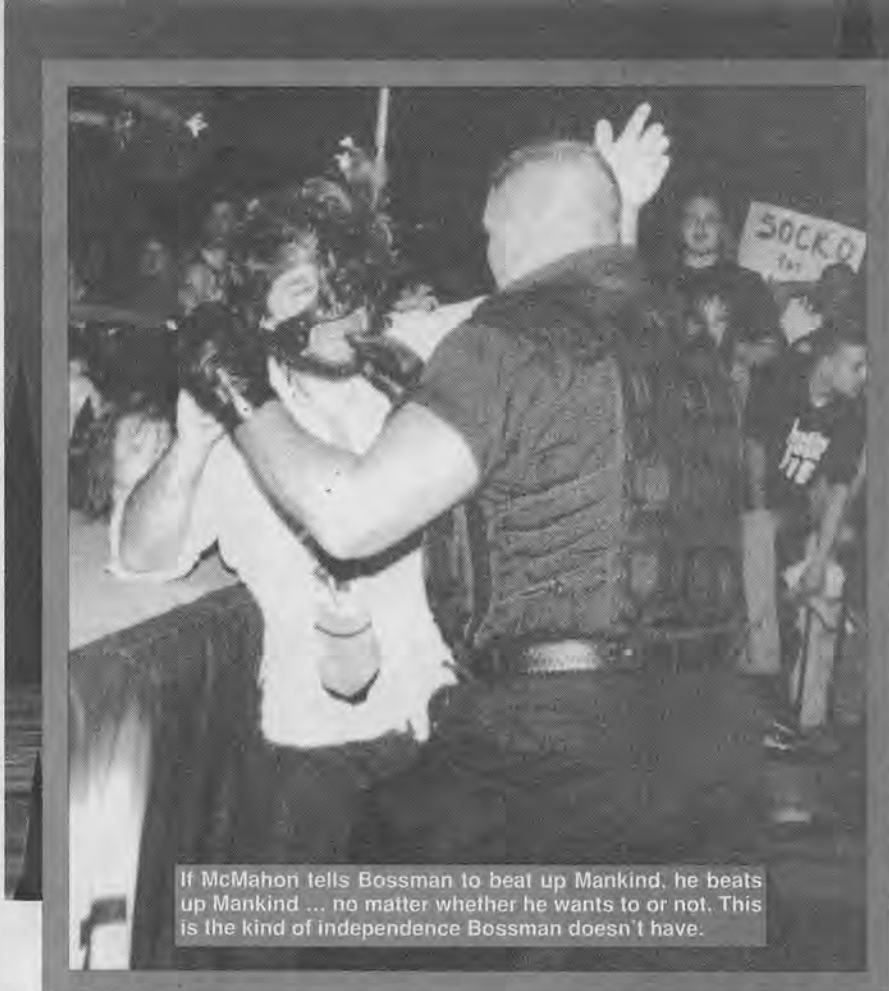
"Considering the big bucks he gets? I might wax Mr. McMahon's car for that type of job," said Jerry Lawler. "He's be a fool to betray Mr. McMahon right now. Look what the man has done: He's given him a new lease on life."

Again, at what cost? Right now, Bossman seems happy to slam his nightstick into the stomachs of

nemeses such as Austin and Mankind. But McMahon has forced him to team with Shamrock, whom Bossman hated just a few months ago. McMahon also directed Bossman to teach his son, Shane, a thing or two. Although fans later learned that was just a part of McMahon's master plan, it leads one to wonder what is next in store for the WWF's chief corrections officer.

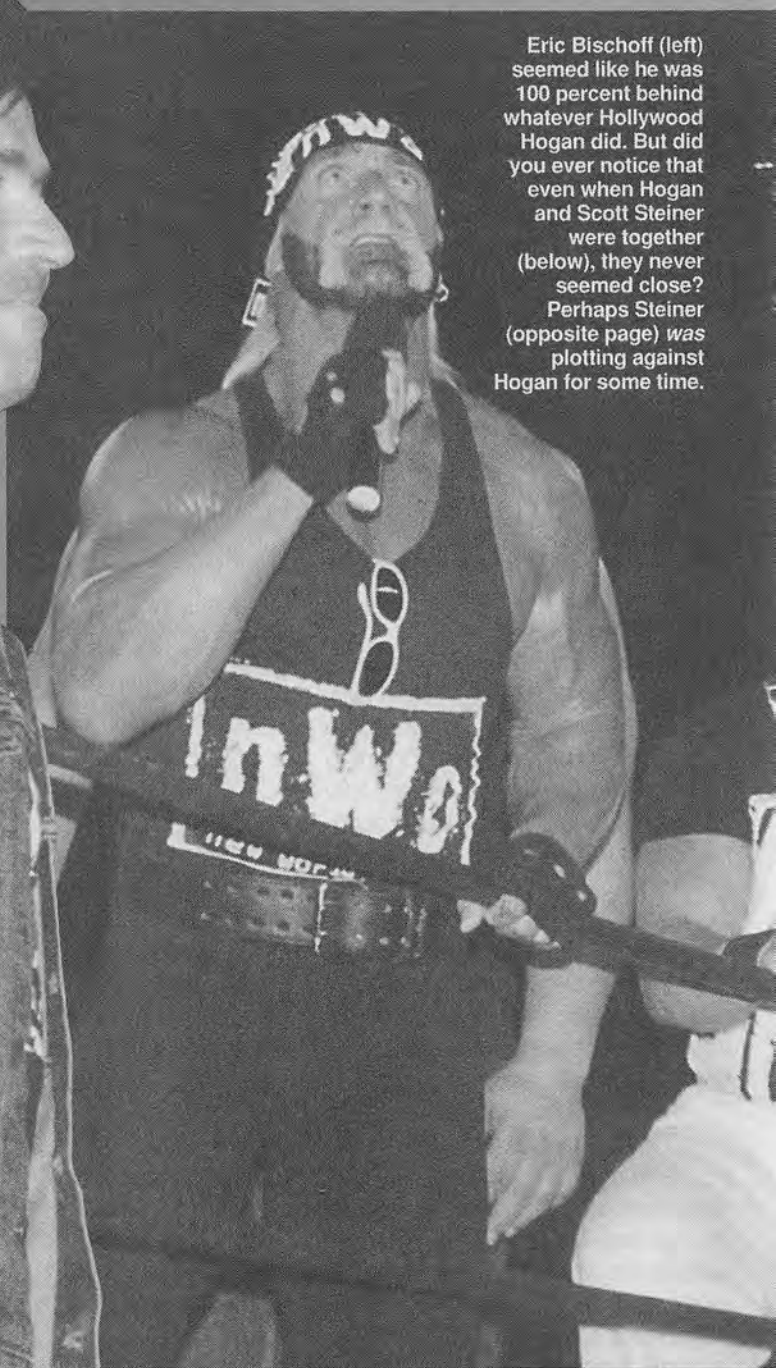
One WWF insider said he knows:

"Big Bossman isn't even worrying about his next assignment," said the source. "All he knows is that Big Bossman sells. Bossman knows that as long as Vince McMahon puts him in the spotlight, he will be paid well and will have a secure job. I don't think Bossman will ever question McMahon on anything, because he desperately wants to remain in the spotlight. If that means he has to sell his soul to the devil, then so be it." □



If McMahon tells Bossman to beat up Mankind, he beats up Mankind ... no matter whether he wants to or not. This is the kind of independence Bossman doesn't have.

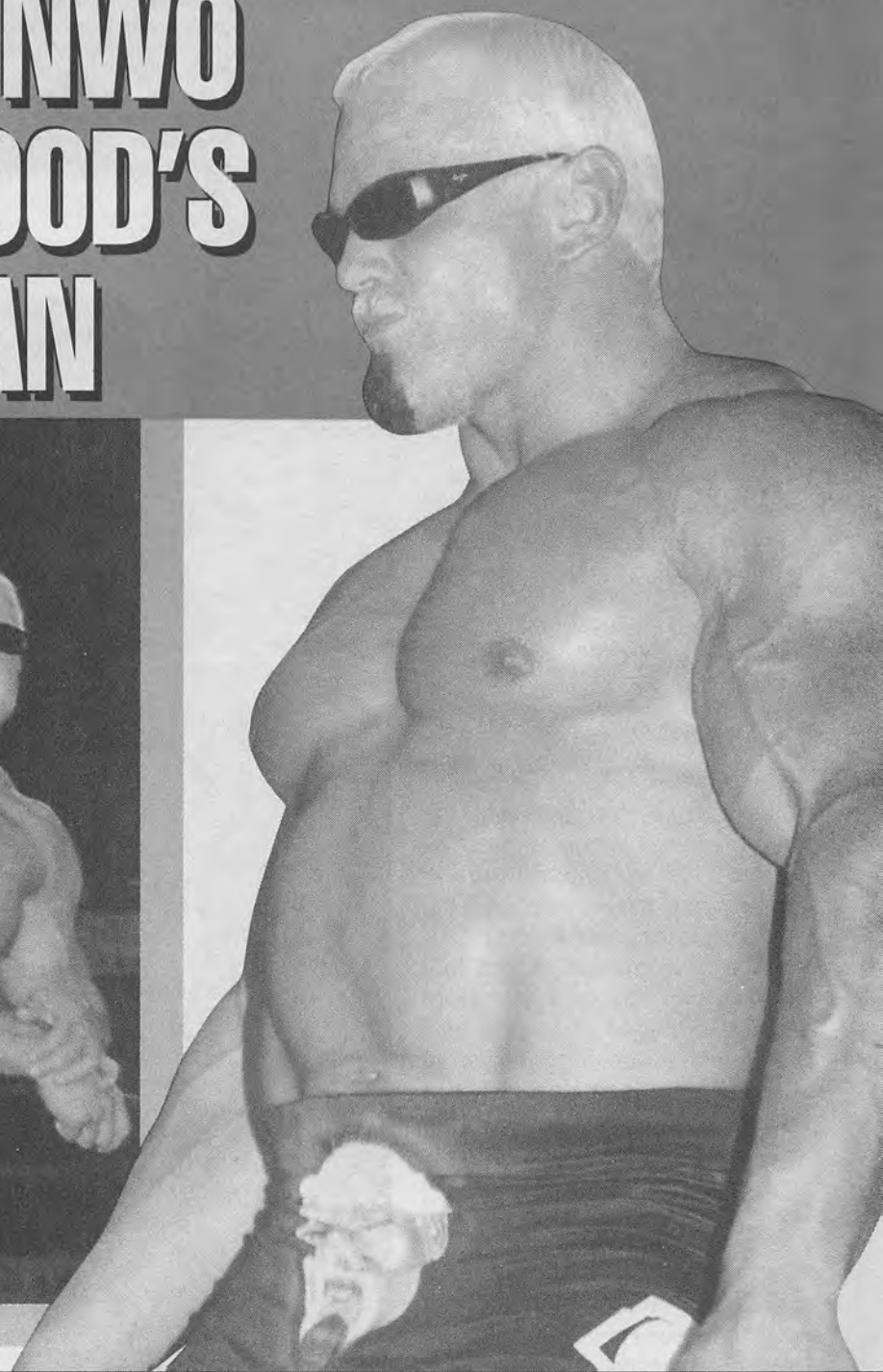
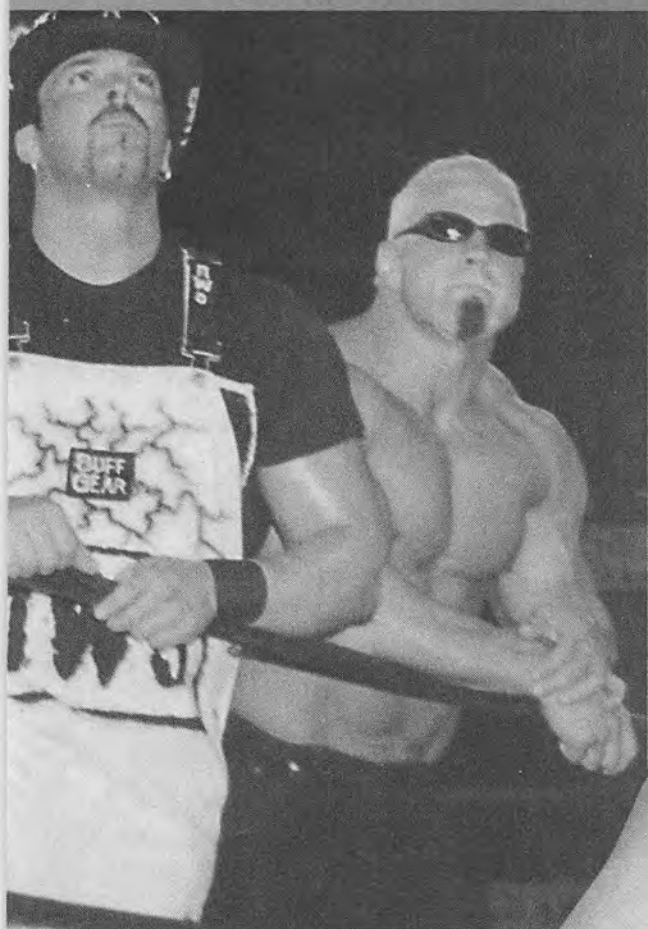
A Bischoff-Steiner Conspiracy?



Eric Bischoff (left) seemed like he was 100 percent behind whatever Hollywood Hogan did. But did you ever notice that even when Hogan and Scott Steiner were together (below), they never seemed close? Perhaps Steiner (opposite page) was plotting against Hogan for some time.

After Hollywood Hogan announced his retirement, it didn't take long for Scott Steiner to take over as leader of the NWO black and white. Now, we have learned, it may have been all part of Eric Bischoff's master plan

HOW "BIG POPPA PUMP" BECAME NWO HOLLYWOOD'S MAIN MAN



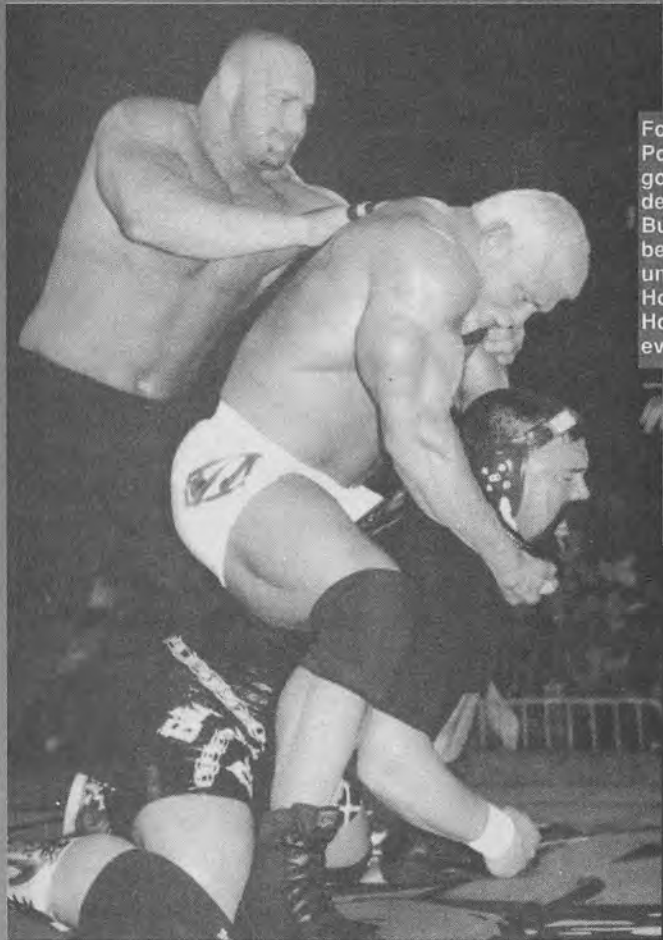
By Dan Murphy

PAUL ORNDORFF WAS at a loss for words. Currently a talent scout for WCW, Orndorff has alternately been one of

Hulk Hogan's closest friends and most hated enemies. He has known Hogan for close to 20 years now, and though he often disagrees with Hogan's opinions, he has always thought he understood

what went on in the mind of wrestling's all-time biggest superstar.

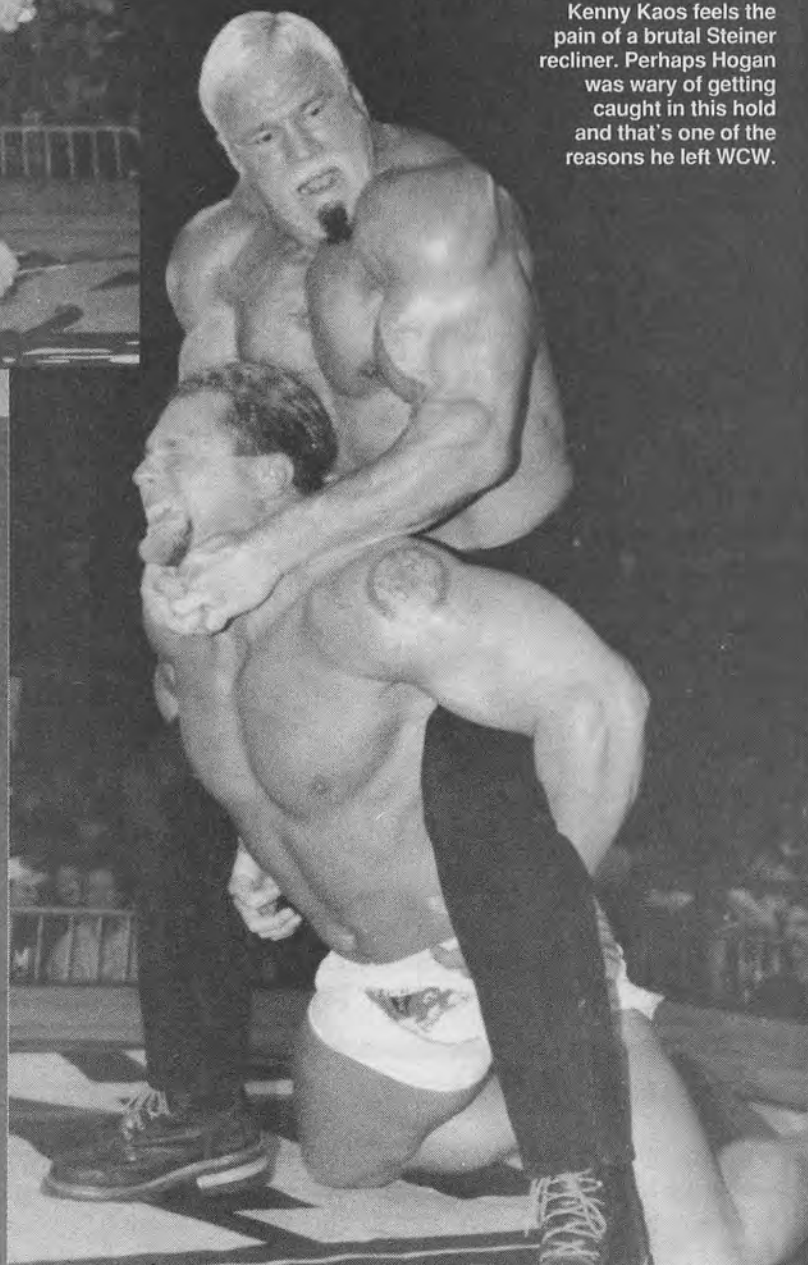
When Hogan turned his back on WCW and became a rulebreaker, Orndorff astutely pointed out that Hogan had been making a mockery



For months, "Big Poppa Pump's" main goal has been to destroy his brother. But he does seem to be more intent on unifying NWO Hollywood than Hollywood Hogan ever was.

Orndorff is not alone in his suspicions regarding Steiner's ascension to the throne of NWO Hollywood. In fact, several wrestlers and locker room sources are quietly questioning Hogan's relationship with "Big Poppa Pump," and one of the bigger rumors that has emerged from the rumblings is that Eric Bischoff may have *ousted* Hogan for Steiner.

First the facts. When Scott left his brother, Rick, to join the NWO, he drastically changed both his



Kenny Kaos feels the pain of a brutal Steiner recliner. Perhaps Hogan was wary of getting caught in this hold and that's one of the reasons he left WCW.

of the rulebook for years with the fans' blessing. When Hogan announced his retirement from the ring to pursue the presidency of the United States, the former "Mr. Wonderful" reminded others that Hogan's ultra-competitive nature demanded that he attempt to best the newly elected governor of Minnesota, Jesse Ventura. But when Hogan just vanished from the WCW radar and Scott Steiner smoothly assumed the role of leader of NWO Hollywood, Orndorff was genuinely perplexed.

"It just surprised me that there was such a smooth transition of power between Hogan and Steiner," Orndorff explained. "Hogan's never been the type to do *anything* quietly. If he was considering retirement, I would have expected him to work a lot more with Steiner, to groom him to take over the NWO he loves. Something just isn't right about this."

look and his attitude. Scott trimmed and dyed his hair and grew a goatee. His arms swelled to superhuman dimensions. He became arrogant and traded in his aerial arsenal for a ground-based high-impact attack. When Eric Bischoff reintroduced Scott to the world, he had become a would-be movie star. He boasted that agents were lining up at his door and declared that he would—and this is a quote—“take over Hollywood.”

At the time, everyone simply assumed Steiner was just being boastful about his alleged film contacts. But was there really a deeper message Steiner was trying to convey?

Now let's take a look at Hogan's history. His shattered friendships are well-documented. Throughout his career, Hogan has built up friendships that have fallen apart simply because Hogan is Hogan. Depending on whom you ask, these friends either become fed up with Hogan's ego or overwhelmed by the desire to end the Hogan legend. There was Randy Savage. And Andre the Giant. And Orndorff. And Brutus “The Disciple, Butcher, Zodiac, Booty Man” Beefcake. Then there were the stars who Hogan said could carry on his legacy. There were the greats (Sting, Warrior), and there were the not-so-greats (Hillbilly Jim, Tugboat, Renegade). In any case, Hogan would team with them, work out with them, travel with them, even join them for interviews. All of this was surprisingly lacking with Steiner. The two men never really seemed particularly close in the ring or away from it.

And then there's Bischoff. Bischoff nearly lost his job as a high-paid WCW executive when he joined the NWO. Nobody, but nobody, would take a worse fall than he would if the NWO black and white were to fall apart. When Sting beat Hogan at Starrcade '97, Bischoff realized exactly how close he could be to the unemployment line if his meal ticket

Scott Steiner (shown attacking Rick) insists that he was anointed the new leader of NWO Hollywood by Hogan himself. The transition could not have been that smooth, could it?



was unable to regain the WCW belt. At about that time, Steiner began receiving more and more offers from Bischoff.

Maybe it was a coincidence, but the timing makes it appear as if Bischoff bought Steiner as a high-stakes insurance policy to protect himself. Steiner came in knowing he'd eventually take Hogan's place whether Hogan liked it or not.

But the question begs to be asked: Why replace Hogan with a man known more for his tag team career than his singles success?

“Scott Steiner knows about teamwork,” Mike Tenay suggested. “Scott knows first-hand what makes a team great. He knows that you've got to put aside individual differences and come together for the good of the team. Under Hogan, NWO Hollywood never really seemed to have its goals in order. Hogan was preoccupied with the likes of Jay Leno, Karl Malone, and Dennis Rodman,

and NWO Hollywood suffered because of it. I think Steiner is trying to turn that around and reunite the black and white.”

Some have suggested that Bischoff was the voice in Hogan's ear urging him to make the presidential run. Maybe Hogan heard the rumors and looked for a convenient way to get out.

After Hogan lost the belt to Goldberg and struggled against The Warrior, Bischoff did become exceedingly nervous, especially with Ric Flair and The Four Horsemen returning to the scene. If Hogan had decided to stick around, Steiner may have had to take a more direct course of action.

When informed of this theory, Orndorff stroked his chin and nodded slowly. A grin suddenly broke out over his face. “Isn't it just like Hogan to not realize the guy standing next to him is ready to put a knife in his back?”

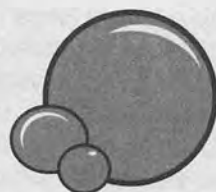
Yes, it is. And who would know better than Orndorff? □

For all you marketing geniuses who have racked your brains trying to invent yet another twist to a line of action figures, dreamed of hundreds of T-shirt designs, and spent hours creating sophisticated wrestling video games, here's a wave you may not be able to control.

We'll call it ...



How can anyone *not* love The Blue Meanie? He's big, he's goofy, and most importantly, he's blue (well, at least the hair is blue!)



Photos by Frank Vitucci

meanie

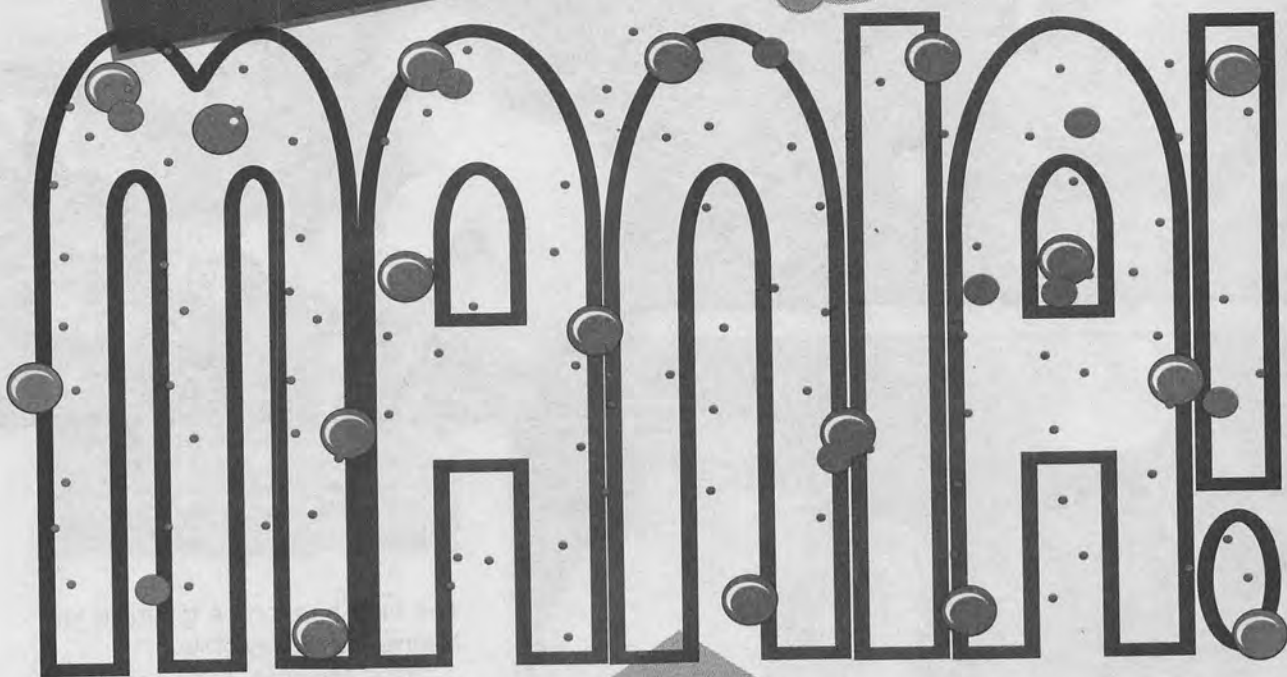
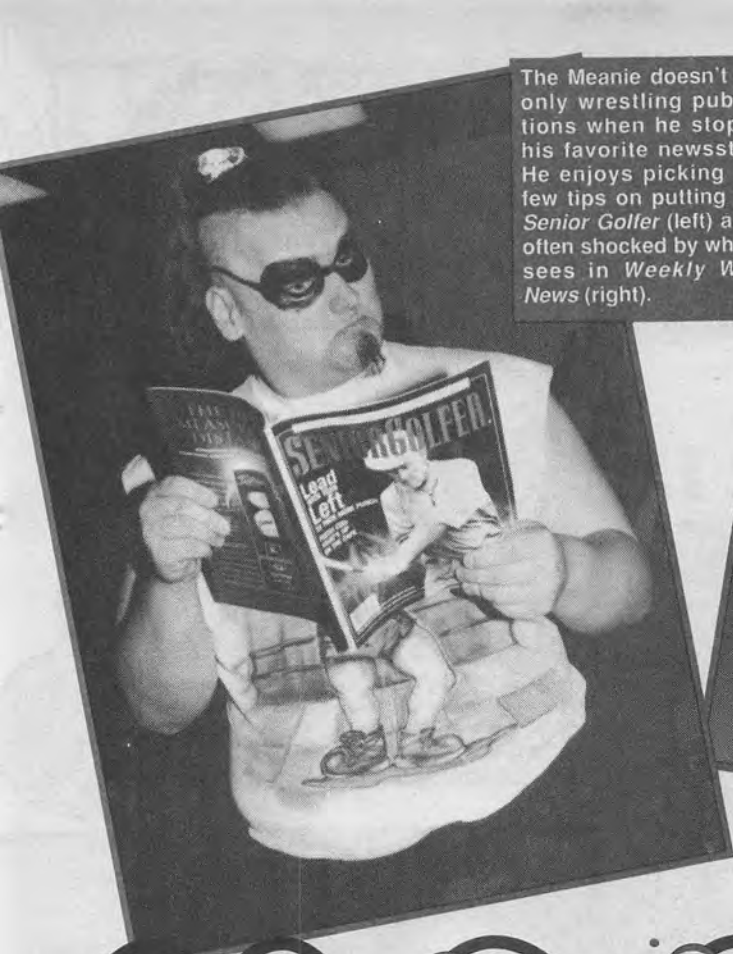
By Harry Burkett

FROM THE WACKY world that brought you plastic heads and Mr. Socko, the WWF is braced to harness the power of blue. Blue

Meanie, that is. He has officially arrived in Vince McMahonland and joined his pals in the J.O.B. Squad. He doesn't plan on setting the wrestling world on blue fire, but it's gonna happen. Take our word for it.

"The Meanie is a simple man who enjoys simple pleasures," said Meanie, who enjoys referring to himself in the third person. "He finds pleasure in the companionship of others. And he can think of

The Meanie doesn't read only wrestling publications when he stops at his favorite newsstand. He enjoys picking up a few tips on putting from *Senior Goller* (left) and is often shocked by what he sees in *Weekly World News* (right).



nothing more worthwhile than being part of the J.O.B. Squad."

But the J.O.B. Squad didn't exactly welcome "The Blue Meanie" at first. Meanie rescued various Squad members from some

poundings, yet he wasn't receiving much in the form of warm thanks from Al Snow or Head right away.

"I don't understand what brought Meanie here in the first place,"

sighed Snow. "I appreciate what he's done for us, and I think he'll be good for the J.O.B. Squad, but there's something weird about the guy. That whole blue thing. It's got some kind of power, a chemistry all

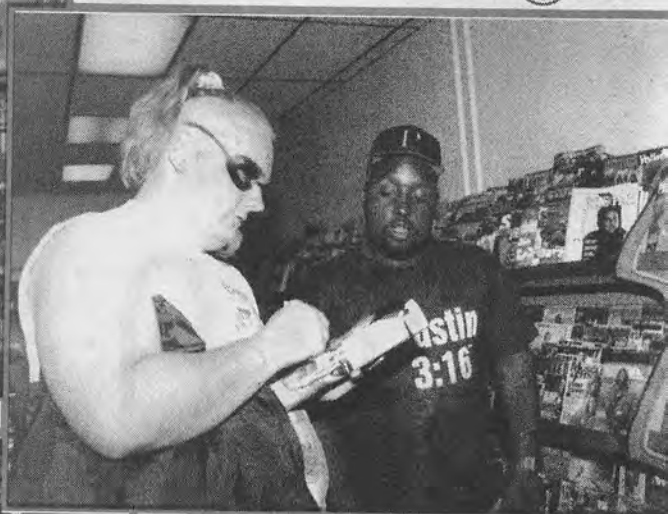
its own, something even Meanie doesn't understand!

"At least Head stays in one spot!" continued Snow. "But blue, that's something else. You can't touch blue, you can't rip apart blue. It's more like a gas, because you can't bottle it. Then other people get in on the act and go 'ka-blu-ie!'"

Al Snow isn't the only person who has a wild reaction to Meanie and his "blueness." It can be seen every time Meanie makes an appearance in an arena, or whenever someone catches a glimpse of him on the street (he's hard to miss).



The sign at the dollar store said that everything in the store cost a dollar, so Meanie offered a buck for everything in the store (above). When his offer was rejected, he just went in and checked out some wrestling figures (left).



Everywhere the Meanie goes, people ask him for his autograph. Care to guess what color pen he prefers to use when signing?



When you're in the J.O.B. Squad, you expect that your body will take some poundings. Meanie likes to look good. This young lady did a nice job on his fingernails. She painted them a nice shade of ... well, you know.

The blue hair isn't a gimmick for Meanie. It's his way of life.

"The Meanie can pop into McDonald's and order a large fry and the cashier will just look stunned," said Meanie. "Meanie gets these reactions from people who have no idea who he is. If he wore any other color, the reaction wouldn't be the same. There just wouldn't be any magic if he were The Yellow Meanie. The Blue

Meanie attracts attention."

That was certainly the case when Photo Editor Frank Vitucci grabbed his camera and followed Meanie around for a day. Whether Meanie was standing on a street corner, looking through magazines, or in search of new eye-wear, the reaction was the same.

"It was amazing," marveled Vitucci. "Attraction to The Blue Meanie is definitely spread by casual contact. People would stop what they were doing and stare at him. When he caught them by surprise, they would just giggle like lunatics. Meanie has got some kind of weird charisma."

Even though Meanie has secured a WWF contract,

Meanie (shown attacking Christian Cage) had to work hard to earn his spot in the WWF's J.O.B. Squad. Al Snow, the leader of the group, still doesn't quite understand him.



Come on, ladies, wouldn't you like to have the Meanie escort you to some lavish formal affair? Believe us—he looks great in a tuxedo!

there's no indication that WWF officials have a clue as to what Meanie is all about.

"The Meanie expects the marketing gurus to haul him up to Titan Towers, strap Meanie to a table, and attach electrodes to his head to try to figure out what



Meanie never feels too blue when he goes online and chats with his many, many fans!

makes him tick," mused Meanie. "They'll come up with blue T-shirts, blue action figures, and they could sell little bottles of blue water.

Wouldn't that be 'blu-ti-ful'?"

Snow and friends have witnessed what blue can do. Is the WWF really ready? □

HOTSEAT

HOLLYWOOD HOGAN

"YOU'LL BELIEVE ME WHEN I'M SITTING IN THE WHITE HOUSE!"

THE ELECTION OF Jesse Ventura to the Minnesota governorship on November 3 made a lot of people reconsider the qualifications of politicians. Ventura proved that a former wrestler with a keen mind and a respectable suit can be successful in politics.

But what about a wrestler who doesn't conform to conventional standards?

Hollywood Hogan claimed that if "The Body" could become governor, then the most recognizable wrestler in history would have a good shot at being elected President. He's determined to do it his way, complete with sunglasses, muscle shirt, dark stubble, and feather boa. In fact, the Hollywood Hogan who announced his retirement to pursue the presidency looked a lot like the Hogan who has been spray-painting his opponents for the last two years.

Yet he sounded much different. Gone was the "Well, you know, brother ..." hyperactive Hollywood Hogan. In its place was a very serious—and, possibly, very sincere—man with great aspirations.

As Hogan hits the campaign trail, his retirement from wrestling is still having an effect. He anointed

Scott Steiner the new leader of NWO Hollywood and keeps in daily contact with "Big Poppa Pump," as well as with nephew Horace Hogan and other members of the black and white.

How does Hogan hope to energize the American public in his latest quest? Does he have a firm grasp of the issues, or does he think common sense is enough to run a country? Will he ever return to wrestling? Senior Writer Harry Burkett discussed these issues with candidate Hogan when he made a campaign stop at *INSIDE*

"[Ventura's] success in Minnesota struck a personal chord with me, and I think that would have happened whether I had known him or not."

WRESTLING's editorial offices. Said Burkett: "I think Hogan has been reborn ... again."

Q: Thanks for visiting our offices once again, Mr. Hogan. Today we're setting a record of sorts,

because you may be the only wrestler in history who has been featured twice on the "Hotseat" during a six-month period.

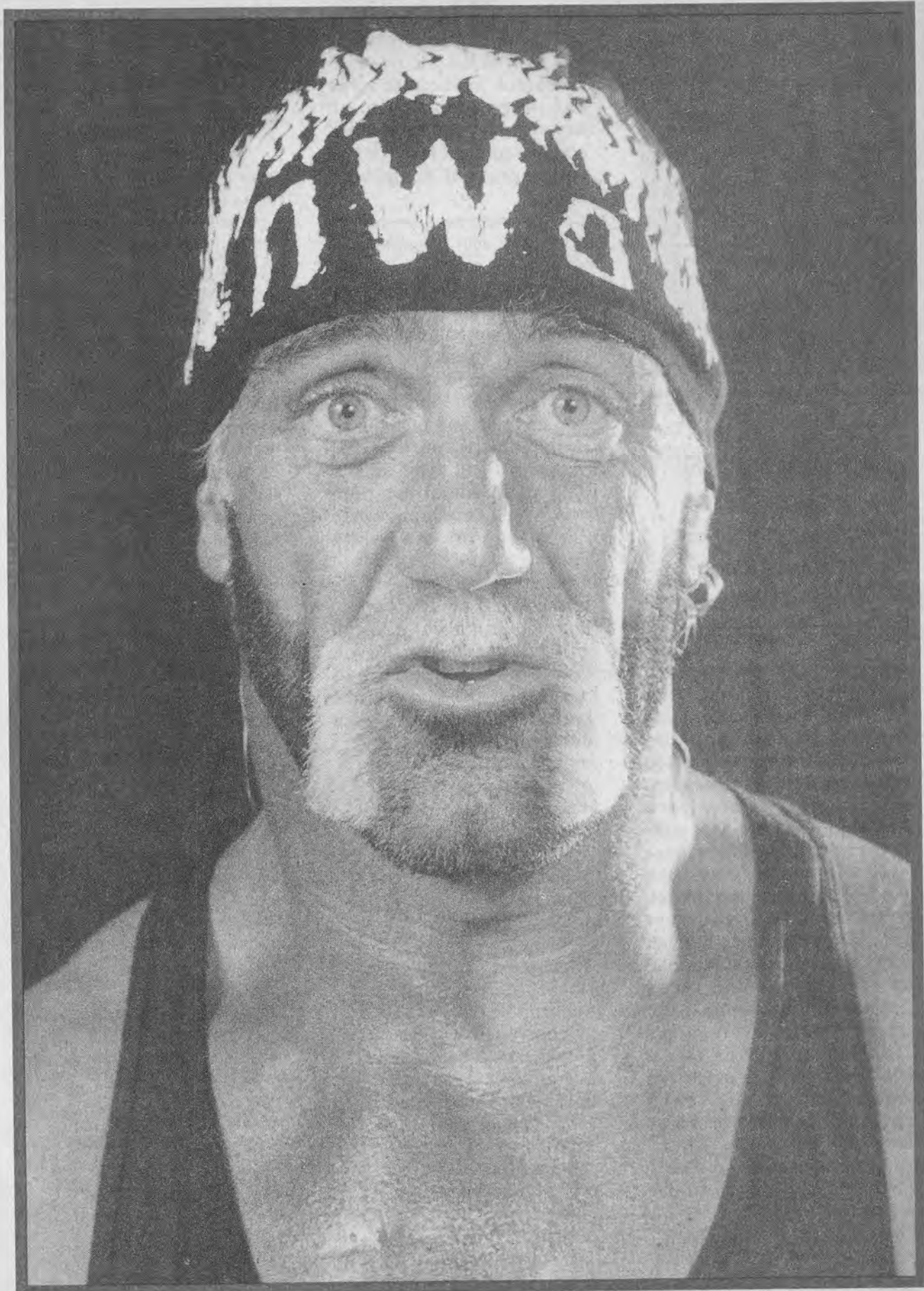
A: You better believe me, Harry, I'm going to be setting all kinds of records in the next few months. Grill away, brother.

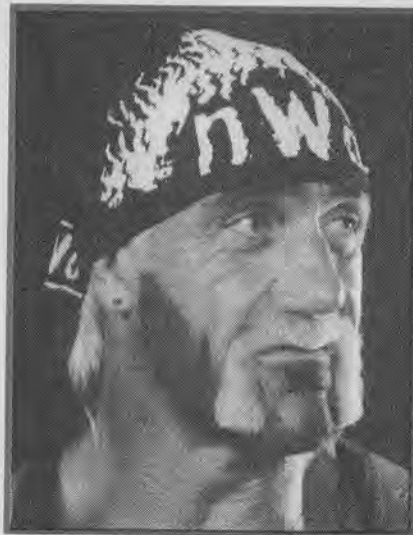
Q: You asked for it. First of all, didn't your campaign start out as a publicity stunt to mock the gubernatorial victory of your old rival Jesse Ventura?

A: I wasn't mocking Jesse Ventura, I was honoring Jesse Ventura. Yeah, we had our share of battles in the ring and a war of words over the years, but this goes way beyond saluting a fellow wrestler. His success in Minnesota struck a personal chord with me, and I think that would have happened whether I had known him or not. Whenever a colorful, no-nonsense character like "The Body" can achieve success in the phony world of politics, that's a big win for all of us.

Q: What gave you the idea of declaring your candidacy?

A: The day after the election, my phone rang off the hook with





"I asked myself this question: Who in NWO Hollywood is closest to being the spitting image of Hollywood Hogan? The answer was Scott Steiner."

people asking me what I thought of Ventura's victory. I told them I was happy for him and thought Minnesota and America needed that kind of leadership. Every single person, each thinking he or she was asking an original and clever question, always ended the interview by asking, "Well, Hollywood, will you ever run for public office?" Each time I was asked, I laughed it off. Later, when I was home with my family, I got to thinking: *If every single person who talked to me had asked if I were running for office, maybe that's what the common man was thinking, too.*

Q: But at least on Nitro, you treated it as a joke. Did you have to bring out a Monica Lewinsky lookalike to be your intern? And, come on, did she have to hand you a cigar?

A: That was just my way of illustrating absurdity. To think that kind of issue now dominates our public discourse should be insulting to all Americans. It's time for this country to elect leaders that will represent them with honor.

Q: Can you represent the country honorably with a feather boa around your neck?

A: Depending on how far this goes, there may be a time when I have to dust off my business suits. For now, I want America to know me for who I really am. And like it or not, the glitz and glamour of Hollywood is part of the package. If you think I'm kidding about any of this right now, you'll believe me when I'm sitting in the White House!

Q: To let our readers know you are very serious, I should mention that you do have a circle of political advisers.

A: I have some experienced political people advising me. I retain them because from a communications and public relations standpoint, they can get my message out to the people.

Q: At what point did this evolve from a way of honoring Jesse Ventura to a serious effort on your part?

A: That's not exactly the right premise, man. I honored Jesse Ventura in a humorous way while at the same time making a serious statement about my own intentions.

Q: Kind of like the Rush Limbaugh method? You're trying to make serious points in an entertaining fashion?

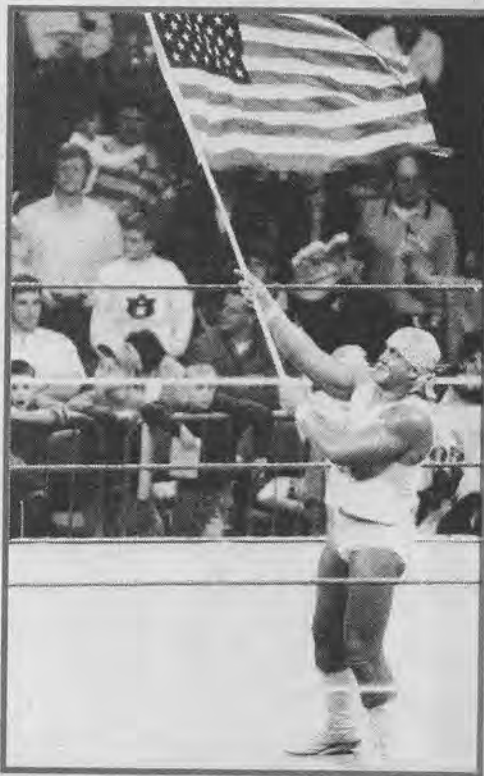
A: Exactly.

Q: You sound completely different from the person

who in that same chair only six months ago was ranting about knocking The Warrior's face paint off. Isn't that a less-than-dignified demeanor for someone seeking the highest office in the land? How long do you think it will take for your political opponents to use footage of you telling the fans to "stick it" or bashing Roddy Piper's injured hip with a steel chair?

A: If you want to excel in a particular endeavor, you must have a certain mindset for the task at hand. You've got to be ruthless to be successful in wrestling, and I've demonstrated that by becoming the greatest wrestler of all-time. Hollywood the actor and Hollywood the politician are other facets of the same person.

Q: Let's talk about the facet of Hollywood Hogan that has been most visible for the past 20 years: Hollywood the wrestler. You have taken a leave of absence from NWO Hollywood to pursue the presidency, and you've left Scott Steiner in



charge. Why do you think "Big Poppa Pump" is most qualified to lead NWO Hollywood when guys like Curt Hennig, The Giant, or even your nephew Horace are in a better frame of mind to do so?

A: What's wrong with Scotty's frame of mind?

Q: He wants to attack everyone he sees! He's gone after referees, announcers, and even Judy Bagwell! How can someone so consumed with hatred make sound decisions about the long-term future of NWO Hollywood? He can barely control himself. Again, let me ask the question: Why not Hennig, The Giant, or Horace?

A: It wasn't a question of picking one person over another. I asked myself this question: Who in NWO Hollywood is closest to being the spitting image of Hollywood Hogan? The answer was Scott Steiner. He's got the look, he's got the second-biggest pythons in the world, and he's

a major motion picture star. I molded NWO Hollywood into my own image. Scotty came closest to fitting that image.

Q: If you fail in your presidential bid, will you return to wrestling? If so, don't you think Steiner will be reluctant to give up his power?

A: First of all, I'm not planning on losing. Like Horace said, it's going to be NWO Washington before all this is over. But if I ever do return to wrestling, I'm sure Scotty would have no problem becoming my lieutenant. No sweat, brother.

Q: I know you've been making many public appearances lately, and you've had many opportunities to mingle with people. Has this experience made you question some of your tactics in wrestling, or made you regret telling your fans to "stick it"?

A: I wasn't referring to all fans when I said that. I was telling that to the people who were anti-Hollywood just to be



"My attitude toward being President will be the same as my attitude toward being a wrestler: I'll tell it like it is, brother."



Hulk Hogan was once known as the sport's ultimate patriot (opposite page), but even so, it's quite a stretch of the imagination to picture him being elected President. If so, would there be places in his cabinet for Eric Bischoff and Gene Okerlund (above)?

anti-Hollywood when I was doing everything I could to be a role model. My efforts weren't appreciated. If those people wake up and realize I'd make a great President, I could forgive them.

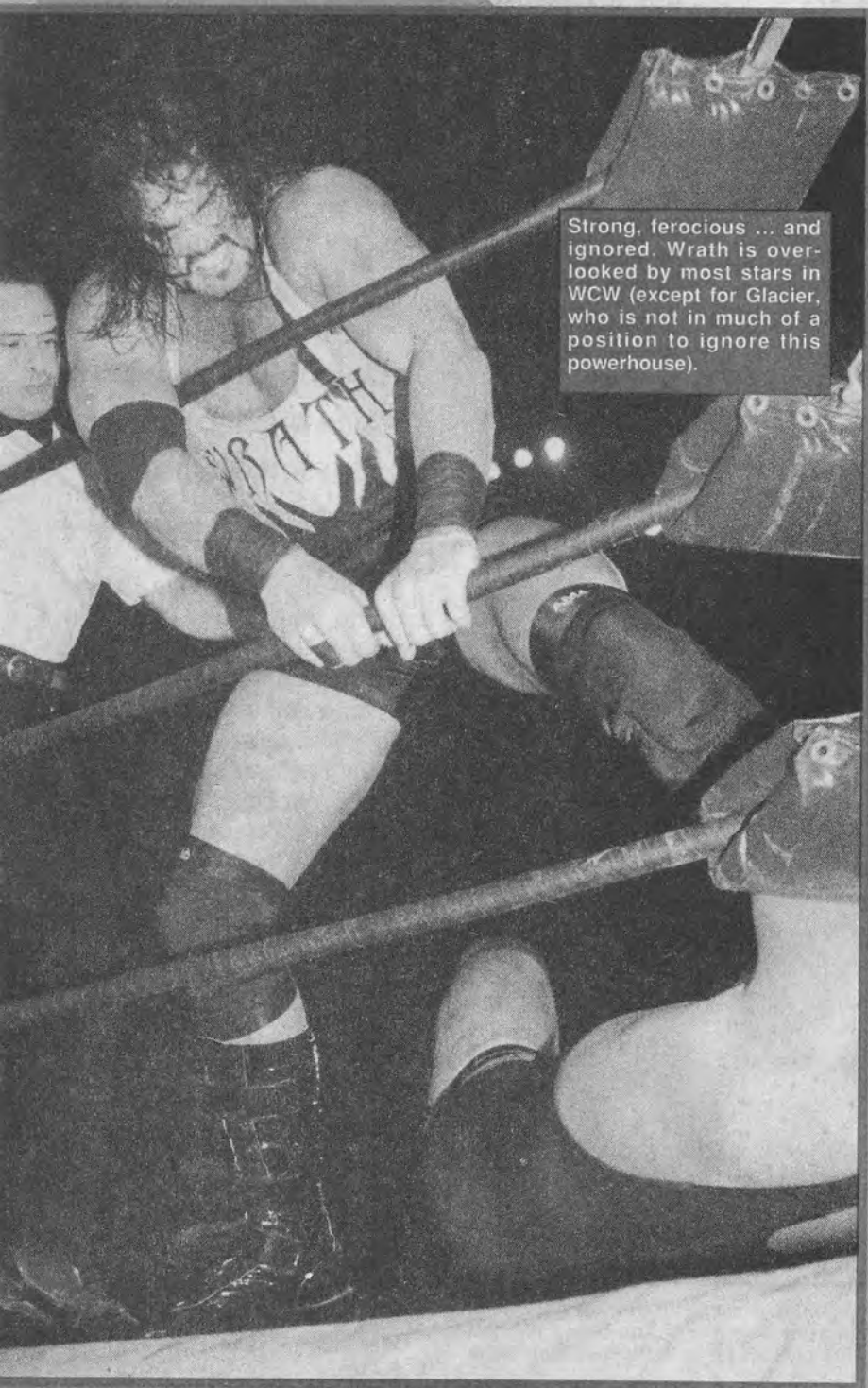
Q: Does your political philosophy lean toward conservatism or liberalism? And where do you stand on some of the issues?

A: I prefer to call it "Hollywoodism." It's about going back to truth, justice, the American way, and, yes, saying your prayers and taking your vitamins. I'll be issuing a platform shortly.

Q: Keeping political philosophy aside, what would be your everyday attitude toward running the federal government?

A: My attitude toward being President will be the same as my attitude toward being a wrestler: I'll tell it like it is, brother. □

OVERLOOK THIS MAN ...



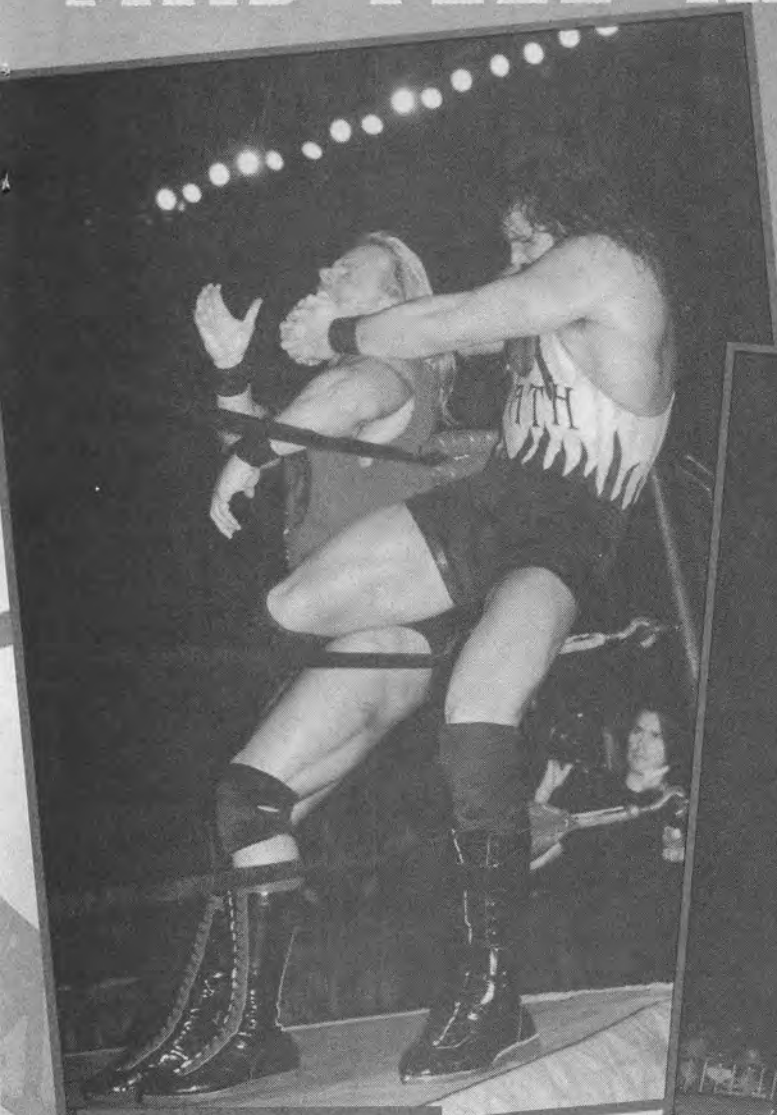
Strong, ferocious ... and ignored. Wrath is overlooked by most stars in WCW (except for Glacier, who is not in much of a position to ignore this powerhouse).

It seems hard to imagine that a 6'6", 292-pound man could be overlooked by anybody, but in today's talent-heavy WCW, Wrath is virtually invisible at times. He's determined to make people take notice ... no matter what the cost!

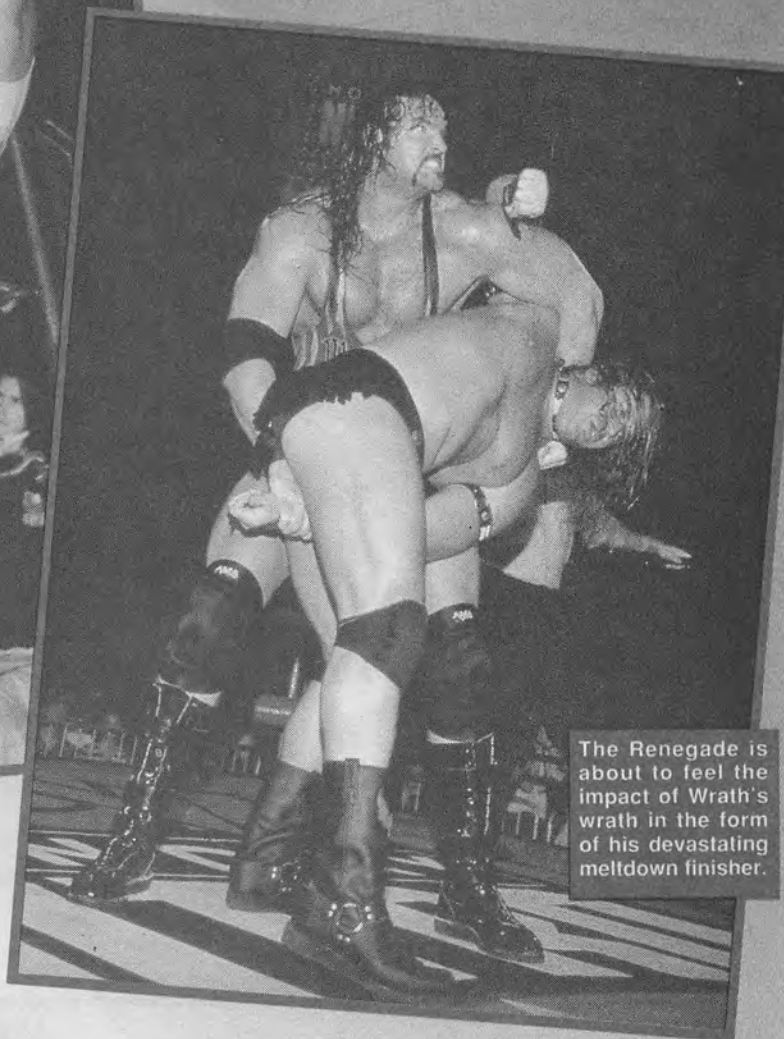
By Dan Murphy

WRATH WASN'T IN a celebratory mood after making short work of Chip Minton on a recent *Thunder* broadcast. In fact, the former Adam Bomb hasn't been in a good

AND FEEL HIS WRATH!



The former Adam Bomb has fared reasonably well against top-level stars like Lex Luger on the few occasions he has been able to secure such matches.



The Renegade is about to feel the impact of Wrath's wrath in the form of his devastating meltdown finisher.

mood for quite a while, despite an impressive winning streak that has seen him get the best of stars like Meng, Glacier, and a slew of Luchadores.

Yes, Wrath is winning most of his matches, but he's running on a treadmill, defeating a lot of the

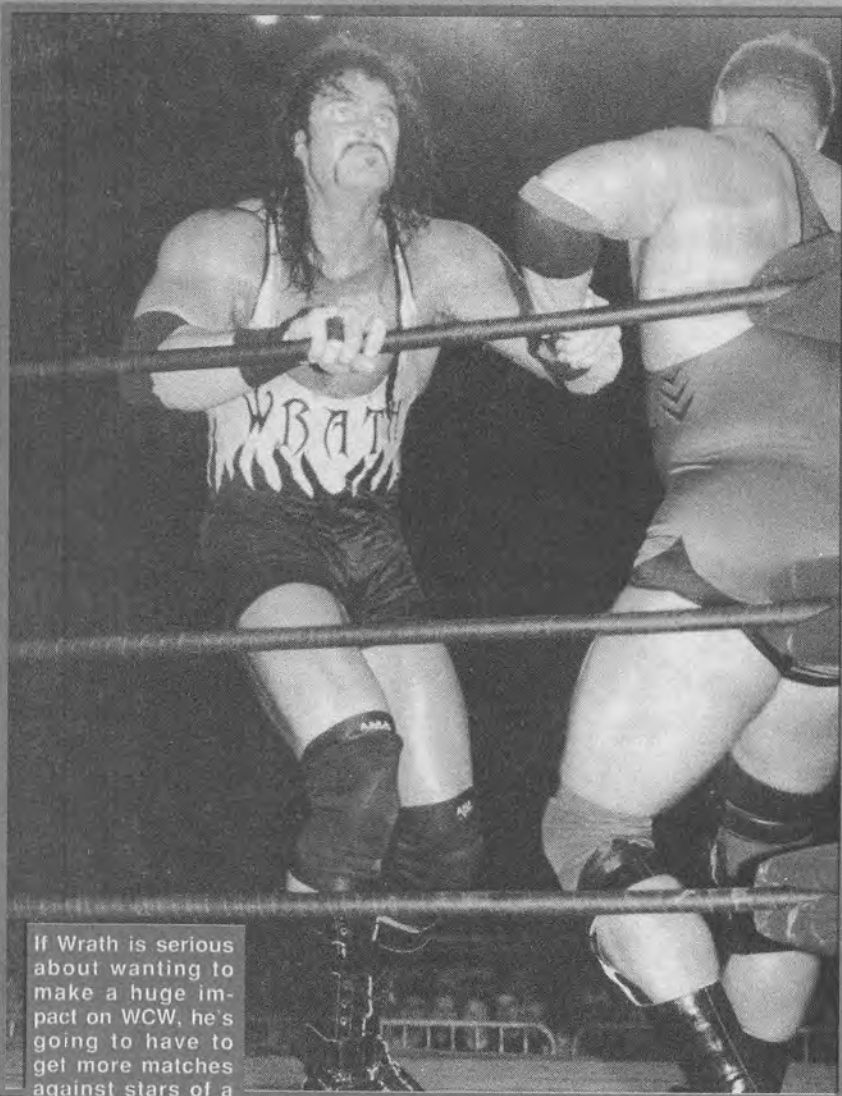
same opponents over and over again. Main events have been hard for Wrath to come by, and he thinks he knows the reason why.

"It's because the Executive Committee is afraid to give a new guy a shot," Wrath spat angrily, launching a boot at an empty lock-

er. "I'm not in NWO Hollywood, I'm not in the Wolfpac, and I'm not a Horseman. I'm not a cruiserweight, and my last name's not Goldberg. That pretty much disqualifies me from main-event status, according to the suits at CNN Center. I'm just gonna keep hurting people until I get taken seriously."

That's a frightening sentiment coming from a man of Wrath's size. After all, he is one of WCW's premier power merchants, in a class right alongside Scott Norton, Lex Luger, Kevin Nash, and Scott Steiner. Wrath has been known to go to the top rope for a crushing shoulderblock or clothesline. Plus, there's his meltdown finisher, a pumphandle variation of the power bomb, which invariably results in a Wrath win.

So what we have here is a frustrated man with incredible strength, a multi-faceted offensive attack, and a knack for developing innovative new finishing moves. So how has Wrath gone this far without



If Wrath is serious about wanting to make a huge impact on WCW, he's going to have to get more matches against stars of a higher caliber than Glacier (above and below).



that Wrath was ... well, overlooked.

"Oh, yeah, I guess I never really thought about him," Lex Luger mused when asked about his oversight. "He's a big, strong guy, and I've had some tough matches against him. Yeah, I guess he should make the list."

Other wrestlers asked made similar comments, but the real question is this:

winning a major title, or even getting involved in a major WCW feud?

A recent poll of 10 main-event caliber WCW wrestlers found that

not a single one included Wrath in their list of the top 10 contenders to the World title. It wasn't that Wrath was rated lower than other grapplers mentioned; it was just

Why is it Wrath remains on the cusp of recognition by fellow wrestlers, fans, and promoters alike?

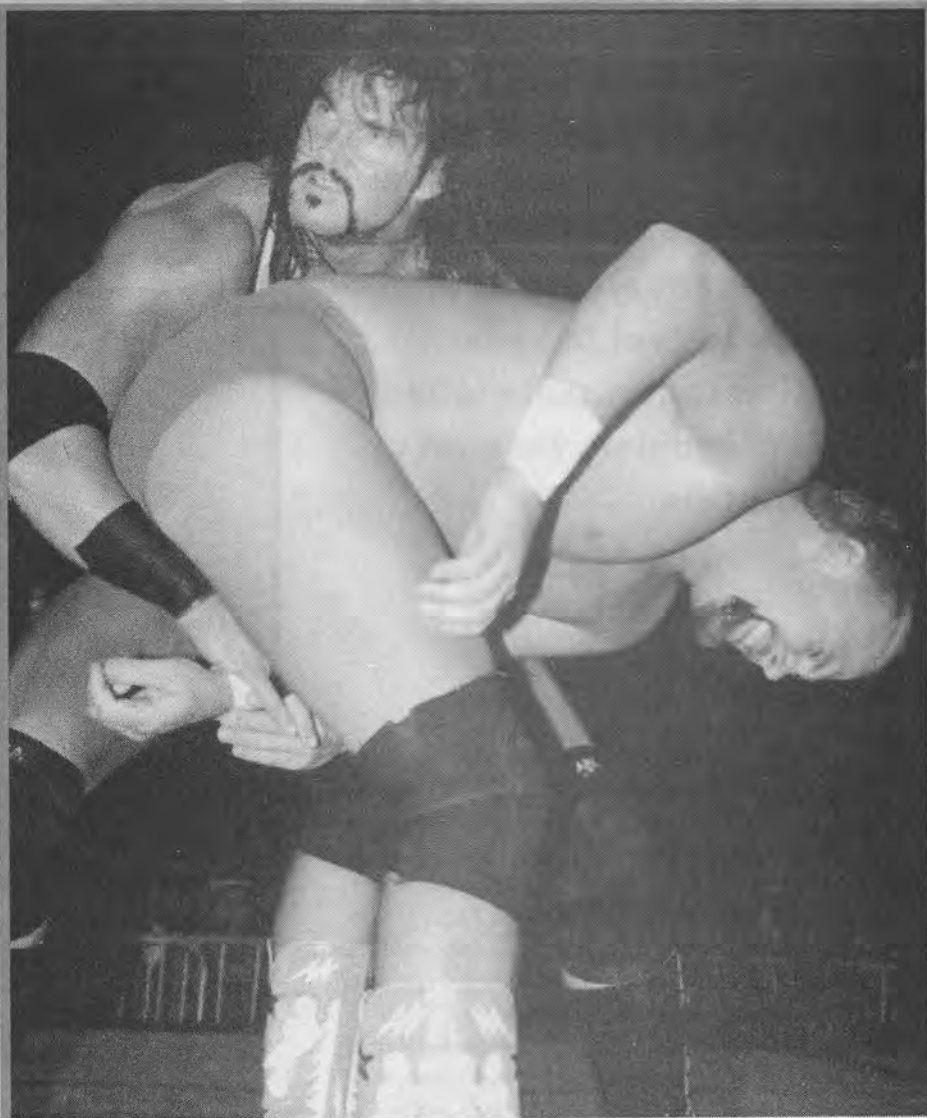
First of all, he doesn't attract a

lot of attention to himself. He wrestles his matches and wins more often than not, but in today's sport, interviews are almost just as important as victories. For months, Hollywood Hogan only appeared on WCW telecasts to deliver long-winded diatribes or interfere in NWO Hollywood matches. As the new leader of NWO Hollywood, Scott Steiner has adopted a similar approach. And it wouldn't be a Monday night if we didn't hear from Kevin Nash and "K-Dogg," would it? Even Ernest Miller has gotten into the act with his grating "Ain't I the greatest?" routine.

With all those guys delivering entertaining interviews that keep the fans talking long after the ring is taken down, Wrath's one-sided victories often get lost in the mix.

Second of all, Wrath is still trying to overcome his past as Adam Bomb. He failed as a rulebreaker while competing under that moniker, and his run as a fan favorite saw him become complacent while collecting wins over lesser competition and playing to the fans. He has found that other wrestlers remember his half-hearted, undistinguished stint in the WWF more than his current winning streak. That slight makes Wrath even more determined to strike harder and make people focus on the present.

Wrath is also tearing through mediocre competition without a clear goal. Okay, he wants to be World champion, but who in WCW doesn't want that? What Wrath needs to do is to focus on increasing his visibility, either by pursuing the U.S. or TV title, or by courting NWO Hollywood, the Wolfpac, or another clique. Maybe he could take the Bam Bam Bigelow ap-



Wrath can easily overpower Kendall Windham; what he'd like to do is test himself against the power of The Giant and Scott Steiner.

proach and just come and demand to wrestle the World champion. Right now, he's a ship without a rudder, and he's taking his career woes out on whomever steps into the ring with him, especially those foolish enough to take him lightly.

Earlier this fall, Davey Boy Smith learned what happens when a man faces Wrath without a full game plan set in mind.

"I know he's a big man with a bigger chip on his shoulder, but I remembered him more from what he was a few years ago, and I guess I didn't really take him too seriously," Smith said shortly after the match. "I was also feeling like I wasn't getting anywhere, and I

came out a little flat. I mean, what did I have to gain by beating Wrath? Well, he had a lot he wanted to prove, and he saw beating me as the perfect way to do it. At the start of the match, he overpowered me in a lockup, and I knew I was going to be in for a long night."

Wrath is on a mission to be taken seriously, and to be taken seriously, he needs to start beating top opposition. Wrath has been scouting potential opponents for months, and he has both the desire and the ability to surprise some of WCW's elite. Wrath is ready for anyone.

Is everyone really ready for him? □

The telephone wires sizzle each month, as two top wrestlers voice their rage and hostility toward each other. Here's the unedited transcript of their conversation, your chance to feel the raw emotion that results when two antagonists face off ...
One On One

WHEN SHAWN MICHAELS was named WWF commissioner by Vince McMahon, no one was more surprised than HBK's former mates in DeGeneration X. Despite Michaels' appearance alongside McMahon and Team Corporate, many fans were hoping his defection was just a hoax, Shawn's own way of tweaking the WWF owner's nose. But when Michaels floored X-Pac with a chair to ensure Rocky Maivia a successful World title defense on *Raw*, the world learned where the self-proclaimed showstopper stood once and for all.

DeGeneration X struck back at Michaels and McMahon when The New Age Outlaws joined Team Corporate, only to come to the rescue of "Triple-H" and X-Pac during a match against Ken Shamrock and Big Bossman. For once in his life, Michaels was rendered speechless when the Outlaws betrayed him, while the remaining members of DX demonstrated their unity at his expense.

So what happens now? We know which people are on which sides. As commissioner, Michaels holds matchmaking power for all matches involving DX. Michaels has never been known to suffer humiliations quietly. Plus, with Maivia, Shamrock, and Bossman at his side, "The Heartbreak Kid" seems to have ample backup. DeGeneration X doesn't seem overly concerned with Michaels' possible counterattacks. Do the various members of the group know something the rest of us don't, or are they just seriously underestimating what Michaels has in store for them in the coming months?

Michaels and X-Pac were all too ready to square off verbally ... "One On One."

ONE O



"I created DeGeneration X. The rest of you are still trying to soak up my glory and ride my coattails. DeGeneration X died the day Shawn Michaels decided to leave."

—Shawn Michaels

SHAWN MICHAELS: Hey, kid, how's it hanging? Are you, Hunter Hearst Helmsley, Rockabilly, and The Roadie still giggling like little girls because you managed to pull one over on me? Judging from what I've seen, it's pretty much the lone highlight your little version of DeGeneration X has had since WrestleMania.

X-PAC: You've never been accused of being real observant, Shawn. After all, it was your lack of foresight in trusting Mike Tyson that cost you the WWF title, and it's going to be your lack of foresight that screws you over for the rest of your career.

MICHAELS: My point exactly, little grasshopper. WrestleMania is ancient history, and you guys are still stuck on it. Let's fast forward to today, shall we? Your pal "Triple-H" is back from a knee boo-boo. You—well, since this is going into a family magazine, I'll just say you've had your butt kicked by everyone from Jeff Jarrett to D-Lo Brown. The only good thing about your little version of DX was—and I stress was—The New Age Outlaws, and that's why Vince McMahon and I decided to recruit them.

X-PAC: Vince McMahon and I? Come on, Shawn. You're Vince's pawn. Admit it. You're no better than

N ONE



"You're yesterday's hero trying to regain his glory by kissing McMahon's [butt]. If you want to destroy DX, you're more than welcome to get in the ring like a man."

—X-Pac

Shamrock or Bossman or "The Rock." Those guys got titles out of the deal. You just got an executive title. You sold out and you didn't think to get anything out of the deal. You're on the same level as Slaughter, Brisco, and Patterson.

MICHAELS: Who the hell do you think you are, punk? The Kliq made you *everything* you are today, and really, that's not all that much, is it? On the other hand, I've won every title there is in the WWF, and unlike you, if I went down to Atlanta, I'd clean up there, too, because that's just the kind of man I am. You want to lecture me about selling out? "Triple-H" sold out the DX name the day he decided to let you in. I created DeGeneration X. The rest of you are still trying to soak up my glory and ride my coattails. DeGeneration X died the day Shawn Michaels decided to leave.

X-PAC: Yeah, and we'll just forget the fact that you never would have made it to WrestleMania with the belt if it weren't for "Triple-H" and Chyna's interference.

MICHAELS: Oh, yes, Chyna. I guess there is one aspect of DX that HBK misses, if you smell what the com-mish is cookin'. I guarantee that if Shawn Michaels was still in the group you call DX, Chyna wouldn't have to look to Mark Henry for romance. That's for damn sure.

X-PAC: You're so full of crap you don't know your head from your butt. Chyna never had anything to do with you on anything more than a professional basis, and you know it just as well as I do. I know you well enough to see through your little mind games. And as far as Chyna's relationship with Mark Henry, that's her damn business.

MICHAELS: You know what they say about a sinking ship—even the rats know enough to jump off before it goes down. Well, pallyboy, DeGeneration X is making the Titanic look like the Love Boat right about now. Maybe I should talk to Vince about having "Triple-H" and "Mean" Mark Henry square off in a ladder match with Chyna suspended over the ladder. First one to her gets to keep her.

X-PAC: You're a sick man, Shawn. You keep setting up the matches, and DX will keep finding ways to win 'em. Then what happens when Mr. McMahon sees you can't get his dirty work done as commissioner? One day you're hitting me with a chair, and the next, Ken Shamrock will snap your ankle to make sure you never wrestle again. You're trying to tear DX apart, but what you've done is make us stronger. You see, now we're all bound with a common purpose that's bigger than any title. We're going to find ways to make you look bad. Oh, and you said DX died when you left? No, Shawn. "The Heartbreak Kid" died the day DX booted his sorry [butt] out!

MICHAELS: Oh, is that the way it is, X-Pac? Ooh, you guys sure outsmarted me. I guess it's all part of your plan to be staring up at the lights every night. And I guess it's all just part of your plan to see all the gold in the WWF end up in Team Corporate. You guys are really quite clever, ain't 'cha? Well, just keep doin' what your doin', 'cause I haven't had any complaints from Vinnie Mac so far.

X-PAC: Once again you're not being all that observant. Just listen to the fans tell you what you are whenever you come down to the ring. You're yesterday's hero trying to regain his glory by kissing McMahon's [butt]. If you want to destroy DX, you're more than welcome to get in the ring like a man and give it your best shot. We're kind of easy guys to find.

MICHAELS: That's not the plan, young one. I don't need to get back in the ring and prove anything to you or anyone in your little group there. No one else in the world has won the World Wrestling Federation title, the tag team title, the Intercontinental title, *and* the European title, in case you haven't noticed. Even if I never wrestle another match, I don't have to worry about my legacy in the WWF. I know I'm the greatest superstar the WWF has ever seen. Maybe me getting back into the ring is like plan B or plan C, but I truthfully haven't had to think that far along, because I damn sure know plan A will work. Plan A is for me to just sit back and watch—*ahem*—DX disintegrate. You guys don't have the skills, you don't have the character, and you don't have the guts to survive the onslaught Team Corporate has planned for you. So what do you have to say about that, son?

X-PAC: You really have to ask, Shawn? DeGeneration X and I have two little words for you!

MICHAELS: Yeah, and I can guess what they are. You're real original. □

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Sincerely Yours

(Continued from page 5)



Raven acquitted himself well in his feud with Dallas Page last year and even beat DDP for the WCW U.S. title. Derrick Pierce enjoyed reading about Raven in a recent "Capsule Profile."

nobody cares. Everybody knows he is all talk and no fight.

DAVID MILLER
Oakton, IN

while. It is obvious they don't do that very often.

REN BUCHANNON
San Francisco, CA

THUMBS UP ...

Last December, I read about ECW in INSIDE WRESTLING for the first time. I saw pictures of ECW wrestlers who were all bloody, but I had never seen an actual ECW show.

I was curious to see what ECW was all about, so I checked out the November to Remember pay-per-view. I have to say it was the best pay-per-view I saw all year. It had cursing, partial nudity, blood, violence, broken tables and chairs, and shopping carts—everything a wrestling card should have.

I give a huge thumbs up to ECW. They are unbelievable.

DAVID NASH
Utica, KY

... THUMBS DOWN

WCW's *Monday Nitro* has really become boring and predictable lately. Not to mention very disappointing. The announcers hype their all-important main events, but a lot of the matches either never materialize or don't end with a clean finish. Gangs and cliques interfere in all the proceedings and ruin just about every show. And it seems like more than half the show consists of commercials or replays.

If Eric Bischoff and Ted Turner are wondering why *Raw Is War* has taken over as the most popular wrestling show on Monday night, all they need to do is watch their own program once in a

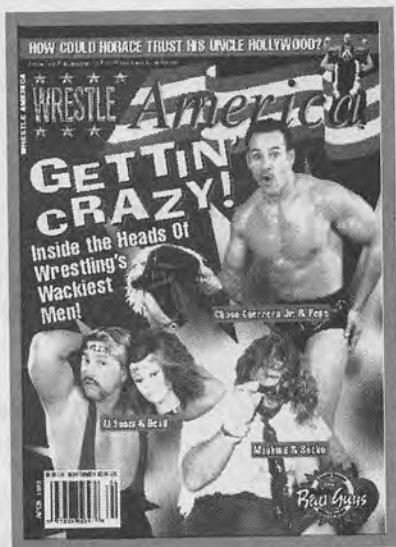
GLAD YOU LIKED IT

I really enjoyed the "Capsule Profile" you guys did on Raven (Holiday 1998). He is a very accomplished wrestler and manager, yet very underrated and very underappreciated. I was happy to see Raven get some much-deserved attention for a change.

I think the former Flock members are selfish ingrates who used Raven to get ahead in WCW, then left him after they got what they wanted. I am confident Raven can rise to prominence again and get his revenge on The Flock.

DERRICK PIERCE
Cambria, NY □

This Month In...



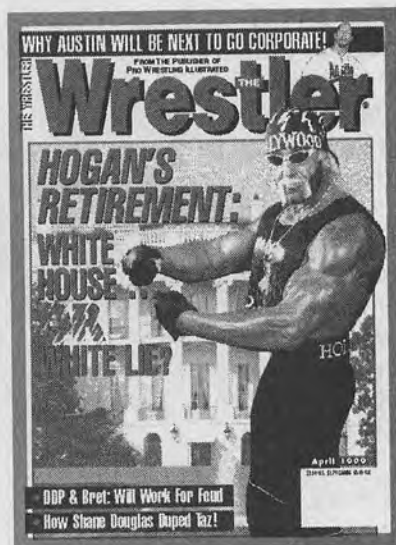
Ever wonder what's going on inside the heads of **AL SNOW**, **MANKIND**, and **CHAVO GUERRERO JR.**? One has a mannequin head for a manager, the other has a name for the sock he puts over his hand, and the other rides around on a wooden horse he named **PEPE**. We've tried to figure these men out ... **DEBRA McMICHAEL** hasn't forgotten that **JEFF JARRETT** referred to her as a "dumb blonde" when he returned to the WWF. Has she *really* forgiven him for that remark? ...

Don't miss the *Wrestling Bad Guys* Year-End Awards!

All this—and much more!—
in the April 1999 issue of
Wrestle America

NOW ON SALE!

Wrestler



So **HOLLYWOOD HOGAN** has called it a career and moved on to the world of politics. We don't believe it. We think he'll be back in a few months, and we'll tell you why ... **VINCE McMAHON** thinks he'll be able to finally trounce **STEVE AUSTIN** if he keeps strengthening **TEAM CORPORATE**. We, however, suspect that "Stone-Cold" himself will be next to go corporate! ... **"DIAMOND" DALLAS PAGE** and **BRET HART** admit they despise each other, but you might be surprised to learn why they're enjoying their feud!

All this—and much more!—
in the April 1999 issue of
The Wrestler

NOW ON SALE!

On The Road

(Continued from page 10)

thought about wrestling in England.

"Nothing new to me," he said. "Just like any other city. The fans here seem to like it. That's all."

The WWF is a worldwide organization, but like WCW, it has had trouble establishing a stronghold in Europe. For whatever the reason, wrestling is very popular in Japan, the United States, Mexico, and Canada, but not quite as popular elsewhere. Sure, the WWF is on TV every week, and the federation has occasional tours of Europe, but it has never caught on in Europe like it has elsewhere. I wondered why. Then I took out my notebook and started asking questions.

Now, the problem with asking questions of the locals in Piccadilly Circus is that there aren't too many locals in Piccadilly Circus. Mostly tourists. One man was from New York City, a couple was from San Francisco, a group of students were from Boston. I ran into one local from the Kensington section of London who told me that "wrestling isn't subtle enough for British tastes." But I looked around, realized Piccadilly Circus wasn't subtle at all, and disregarded his answer. After all, these are people who adored Benny Hill, who wasn't exactly subtle.

It was around two in the morning when I ran into Jeff Jarrett. He was strolling toward the Underground



Val Venis was a big hit with the "birds." One constant between American wrestling and British wrestling is the number of wrestling groupies. Lenker was disgusted by the attention Venis attracted overseas.

station by himself, having failed for the past half-hour to hail a taxi. I suggested we ride the double-decker bus to wherever he was going.

"Interesting city," Jarrett said.

"Been here before?" I asked.

"A few times. The wrestling fans aren't from this area. You have to

go into the residential areas, like Kensington, if you want to find them."

"Think wrestling could catch on big here?"

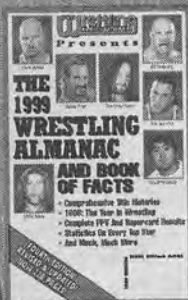
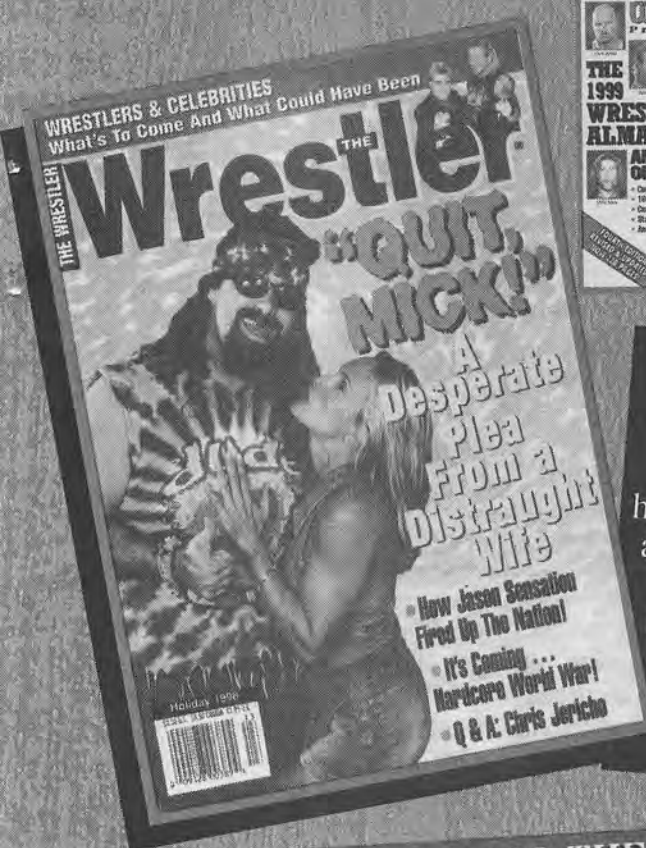
"I think it already has. The problem is, how many pay-per-views can the WWF run in England? How many times a year can we come here? A federation can't be in all places at all times. It has to make some decisions."

Jarrett was right. All federations are regional. It's just that some cover larger regions than others. ECW sticks mostly to the Northeast, although it runs occasional cards in Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, and other states outside the Northeast. The WWF and WCW mostly stick to North America. All-Japan is all Japan. Even England has its share of small independent federations.

Wrestling is a regional sport worldwide. Even the WWF European title is nothing more than another North American-based belt. The World Wrestling Council calls its big belt the Universal

title, although there's nothing universal about it. No wrestling in outer space, after all. Sometimes, the big picture isn't as big as we think it is, even after midnight in Piccadilly Circus, when it seems like the entire world is passing by. □

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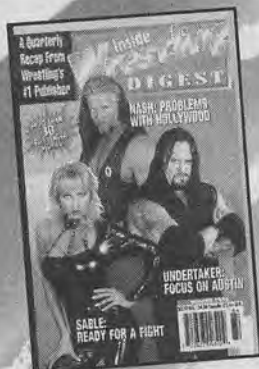
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Behind The Door

(Continued from page 12)



Rather than bicker with WWF owner Vince McMahon, why doesn't "Stone-Cold" just go to WCW? Because McMahon would be happy to see Austin run away from him, although we're not sure why.

McMahon just won't let him.

Which brings up the question that Austin refuses to even address: Why doesn't he simply jump ship to say, WCW, where his talents might be appreciated? Why doesn't he simply change federations and enable WCW to schedule that Goldberg vs. Austin match for which we've all been pining? It would be the pay-per-view extravaganza of the decade, a match to rival Andre the Giant vs. Hulk Hogan in terms of fan interest.

The answer is simple: Austin's not a quitter. There is no way he'd give McMahon the pleasure of seeing him quit on the WWF. He has a new five-year contract, and he's going to enjoy hurting McMahon as much as possible during those five years. Besides, several years ago, WCW wasn't very kind to Austin; the WWF gave him the big break he wanted. Irony, isn't it? McMahon gave Austin a chance to become a superstar. Now he's trying to destroy him.

There are a lot of different ways to look at this situation. Here's one: McMahon has gone crazy. Simply lost his mind. The shrewd business-

man that McMahon used to be would realize that Austin is a money manufacturer for the WWF. He'd want to keep him on the payroll forever and keep him very, very happy. That McMahon is gone, replaced by the nutty McMahon. I'm not sure when it happened or how it happened, but I guess when you really think about it, McMahon's problems started decades ago, when The Grand Wizard blew his nose on Vince's tie.

Really, how do you ever get over something as traumatic as that?

It doesn't take a computer or even a computer genius to figure out what would happen if Austin and McMahon ever squared off in an official match. Austin would win. McMahon would die. At the very least, he'd be confined to a wheelchair for the rest of his life. That's what Austin wants, but he'll never get it.

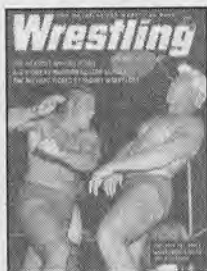
As for Austin vs. Goldberg, well, we thought about feeding this match into the computer just to see what might happen.

But we didn't. That would be cheating. Guess we'll just have to wait until next year. □

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The Insider

(Continued from page 14)

as of this writing), but if it was not for "Stone-Cold," there would be no Team Corporate. And if there were no Team Corporate, there would be no commissioner job for the former DX leader. I lamented when Michaels was good. I called him "Yawn" when he tried to do his best imitation of a rulebreaker. His association with DeGeneration X did nothing to impress me, since DX is merely a band of foul-mouthed, crotch-chopping, pseudo-ring announcers. Austin and Michaels will cross paths again eventually. I await the confrontation. Care to guess for whom I will be rooting?

Steve Austin brought "The Rock" back from the brink of soul-selling. I truly believe that without Austin's noxious presence, the man once known simply as Rocky Maivia would still be raising that eyebrow in honor of the masses. He saw the error of his ways by watching Austin battle McMahon. He saw a man fighting a losing battle and got a little smarter. He knew that there was little room for another fan favorite with Austin and his ego occupying the penthouse. In addition, by joining Team Corporate, he had a built-in rival he could set about destroying—and thereby please the boss. He is also keeping "Stone-Cold" far, far away from the WWF World title.

Steve Austin has singlehandedly rejuvenated the reigning WWF World tag team champions, Big Bossman and Ken Shamrock. When Bossman was Ray Traylor in WCW, he got lost. He had tried other personae, but the nightstick always did fit best. Joining Vinnie Mac and battling Austin is the best thing that could have ever happened to him. He proves that you can go home again ... and again. Shamrock had the I-C belt, but fans did not appreciate his intensity.

They considered him over the top—even though Austin was busy stunning small children (okay, so he didn't do that). Now Shamrock's rage is directed toward Austin and anyone else who gets in his or Mr. McMahon's way.

There is a common thread that runs through all the reasons why "Stone-Cold" is good for rulebreaking. He can create rulebreakers better than anyone. Hulk Hogan once had that talent in the WWF. Whether it was a friend, ally, or casual acquaintance, Hogan would let his ego override any of his interpersonal relationship skills. The

WWF spotlight was his and anyone, friend or foe, was a threat to steal it.

Austin has managed to alienate most men in the WWF through the way he has treated them and through the way he continues to cross the boss. The mindless minions who worship the ground he pours beer on will boo anyone who dares to defy their dour deity. He creates more rulebreakers than General Motors creates cars. A hearty "Hell, yeah!" goes out to the maker of bad guys.

Not to mention a thanks for nothing. □



The Undertaker can thank the "Texas Rattlesnake" for getting his career back on track. "Stone-Cold" was the best thing to happen to WWF rulebreakers in 1998.

On Assignment

(Continued from page 16)



The Tommy Dreamer-Raven feud still ranks as one of the most exciting in ECW history. ECW recovered from the loss of Raven in 1997. It will be interesting to see how it reacts to the latest exodus of talent.

ECW has done an amazing job of building itself up into a major promotion. In the beginning, it ran a few shows in front of a few fans in an old bingo hall. Now it promotes six pay-per-views per year and has an impressive weekly TV show. Its stars have become recognizable to wrestling fans and other promoters. ECW is now a major force in the wrestling industry that generates a lot of revenue. Ironically, the more successful ECW becomes, the more likely its successful wrestlers are to be signed by the competition. It's almost inevitable.

What I can't figure out is WCW's motivation in all this. Does it think these ECW wrestlers will make a huge impact, or does it merely want to destroy some of the competition? WCW boasts the largest talent roster in the history of professional wrestling, yet it continues to collect wrestlers like a kid collects wrestling action figures.

Some of those wrestlers with good credentials join WCW only to get lost on the mid-card level in a hurry.

That is *not* what happened in the WWF in the 1980s. Many of the AWA stars became even bigger stars after joining the WWF. They went on to win major titles and compete in main event matches. Every wrestler the WWF lured away from the AWA seemed destined for something big. Sometimes WCW just seems to be accumulating wrestlers so no one else can sign them.

ECW's plight is bordering on a hemorrhage. Just as one wrestler leaves, rumors of another one negotiating with WCW start. Clearly, it does not have the resources to compete with WCW, so other options must be explored. But how does this David effectively battle Goliath?

ECW briefly had a working relationship with the WWF a few

years ago. Perhaps it's time to crank up the cross-promotion yet again. It could help ECW financially and the WWF ratings-wise. After all, a lot of people believe the WWF saw what ECW was doing a few years ago and decided to make things more extreme on its cards. The pairing would be a natural. Two promotions waging war with a common enemy makes for a great story and even better Monday night programming.

The WWF, however, is doing fine on its own right now and might just want to grab

its share of ECW wrestlers as well. It has already nabbed The Blue Meanie; others could follow. McMahon obviously sees benefit in having those wrestlers all to himself, especially if his rival wants the same thing. And if the WWF can afford to spend \$1.6-million on a 30-second commercial during the Super Bowl, it must have money to pay more wrestlers.

Every war has its casualties. This latest wrestling war is being played out in front of large audiences and is costing the combatants a lot of money, but they're making a lot of money as well. The large armies will conquer, while the others will find it hard to stay in the battle. ECW has made its name by promoting an exciting, entertaining, and unconventional alternative to the Big Two. Its influence has changed the face of wrestling in both WCW and the WWF.

Imitation is one thing. Absorption is quite another. □

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March 1991: The Earthquake Feud Rumbles On: Will Hulk Hogan Be The Victim Of His Own Deadly Obsession? Also: Roberts-Martel, Sting-Hansen, Keim-Perez, Barry Windham.

April 1991: The Steiners: They're The WWF's Greatest Tag Team, But ... Also: Eddie Gilbert, Flair-Sting, Steiners, Roddy Piper, Larry Zbyszko, Sgt. Slaughter.

May 1991: Savage vs. Warrior: The Bloodiest Of Ex-Champions. Also: Steiners, Sting, Virgil, D. Sammartino-I. Koloff.

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Once the best of friends, brothers in wrestling, Bob Backlund and Peter Maivia are now bitter enemies. There is no greater hatred than that born of revenge, and there was no more furious battle than the one which took place between these two former friends

PHOTOS BY BILL APTER

HATRED. THUNDERING, FLAMING emotions which poison the souls of these two men and hurtle them on a violent and maniacal path towards ultimate destruction.

Hatred. A word given new

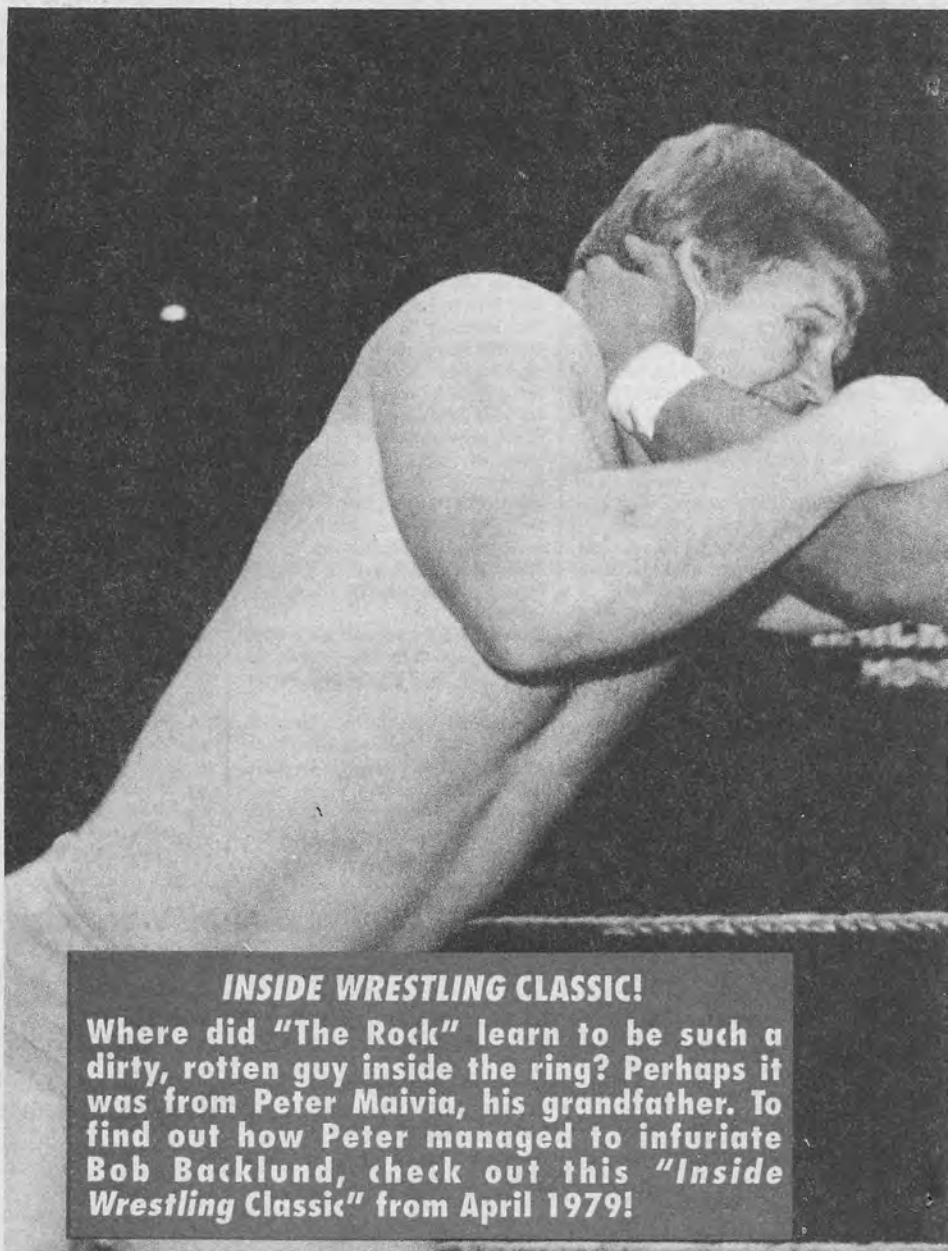
Backlund v



Converted rulebreaker High Chief Peter Maivia applies a nervehold to WWF king Bob Backlund (above). Backlund and Maivia meet and struggle savagely in ring center (right).

meaning and savage re-definition by WWF champion Bob Backlund and High Chief Peter Maivia.

The reason behind this feud is scarred into their memories. Maivia's betrayal throws Backlund into a sputtering rage. Thoughts of Backlund's immense popularity lash at Maivia and freeze him into a portrait of furious jealousy.



INSIDE WRESTLING CLASSIC!

Where did "The Rock" learn to be such a dirty, rotten guy inside the ring? Perhaps it was from Peter Maivia, his grandfather. To find out how Peter managed to infuriate Bob Backlund, check out this "Inside Wrestling Classic" from April 1979!

A MATTER

Hatred. And now it has moved one further fateful step along the road to tragedy.

A steel cage match. One of wrestling's most ghoulish creations. Two men trapped within the confines of steel,

forced to confront the source of their contempt.

Both men gleefully anticipated the bittersweet moment.

"I can't wait to get my hands on that moronic, smiling face and twist it into a melted

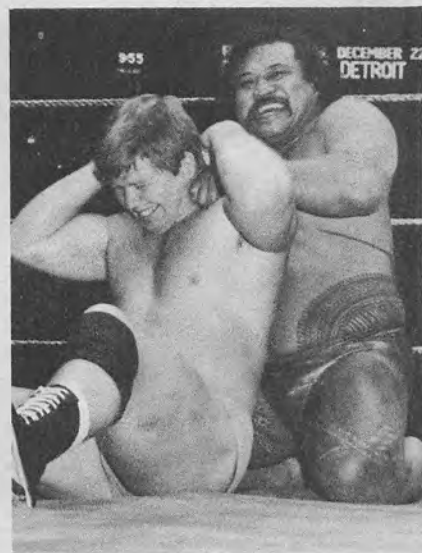
chocolate bar," said Maivia.

"I want to destroy Peter Maivia. That's why I took this match," said an unsmiling Backlund.

Pained bitterness seems to have slipped from Backlund's view of Maivia. All that remains is the rage, though it is still mixed with puzzlement.

"I stopped caring why he did it," said Backlund. "At first, I really wanted to know why he attacked me and Arnold Skoaland. I really cared.

vs. Maivia:



Maivia seems to enjoy the pain he is inflicting on Backlund (above) in a classic Madison Square Garden battle. The feud is growing more heated.

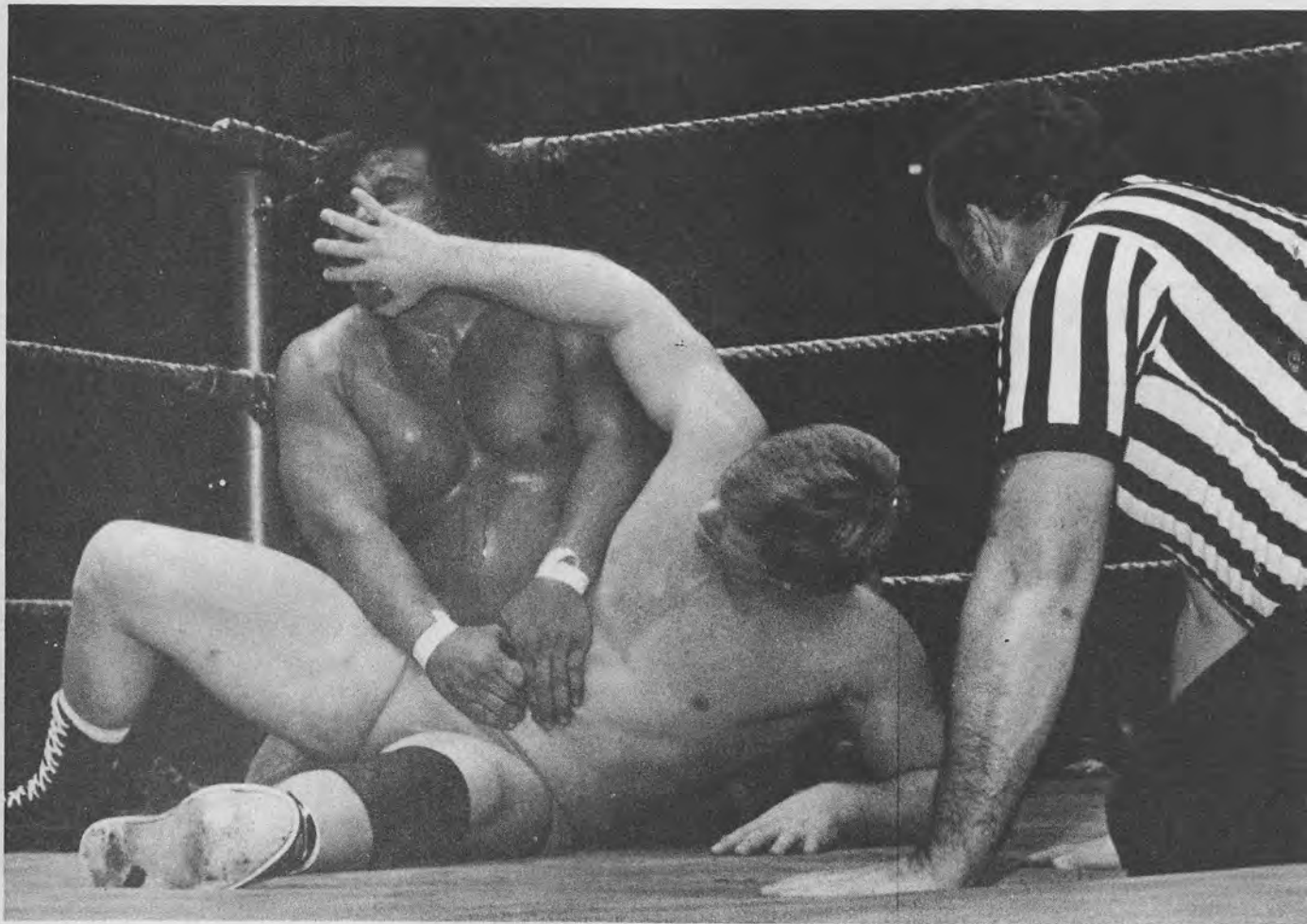
"No more. I'll never understand. I've accepted that. All I care about is paying him back for that betrayal. A traitor deserves only one reward—Destruction.

"He'll get it in the steel cage."

Despite the animosity, Backlund's emotions are mellow compared to Maivia's boasts.

"This will finish Backlund off

OF HATRED



Backlund tries to escape as Maivia applies a devastating stomach rake (above). Backlund seems to be looking for help as Maivia grabs him by the neck (below). Their battles are epics.



once and for all," shouted Maivia. "I'm tired of this feud. I've got better things to do with my life than waste my time wrestling a clown like that.

"Once I win the belt from Howdy Doody, I'll really start after my goal. The extinction of every scientific wrestler in the WWWF. I don't want any rematches. I want them ending up in hospitals."

Maivia cannot stay on the subject of his future for very long. He ponders the various wrestlers. His eyes darken, his face swells and reddens and his heavy fingers form a twisting, churning mass of resentment.

Hatred.

"I can't stand the sight of his face. I want it to be dripping with blood. I have never hated any

man as I hate Bob Backlund. I want to feel his blood trickling between my fingers. I want to feel his bones snap in my hand. I want to hear his screams in my ears.

"Then I want to hear silence. The silence of an unconscious Bob Backlund."

An unsettling tremor flows through this rivalry and elevates it to more than a feud. Friendship was ignored. Moral principles were shattered.

The bonds which once linked them were twisted over the thin line separating love from hate.

Hatred.

It took very little for them to hate. Very little. It will take much, much more to settle it. Perhaps a life is the price.

Hatred. □



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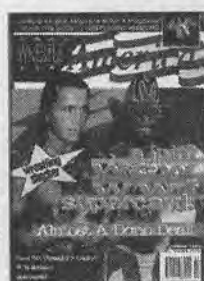
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TOP 15

1—BILL GOLDBERG

(2) No. 2 contender: WCW World title

2—MANKIND

(12) WWF World champion

3—ROCKY MAIVIA

(5) No. 2 contender: WWF World title

4—STEVE AUSTIN

(1) No. 3 contender: WWF World title

5—KEIJI MUTO

(-) IWGP heavyweight champion

6—KEVIN NASH

(8) No. 3 contender: WCW World title

7—KEN SHAMROCK

(3) WWF Intercontinental champion

8—MITSU HARU MISAWA

(-) All-Japan Triple Crown champion

9—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE

(4) No. 4 contender: WCW World title

10—BILLY KIDMAN

(15) WCW cruiserweight champion

11—HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY

(-) No. 4 contender: WWF World title

12—KANE

(7) No. 5 contender: WWF World title

13—SHANE DOUGLAS

(13) ECW heavyweight champion

14—SCOTT STEINER

(-) WCW TV champion

15—ROB VAN DAM

(10) ECW TV champion

WCW

1—HOLLYWOOD HOGAN

(-) 275, Venice Beach, CA

2—BRET HART

(3) 235, Calgary, Alberta

3—BILL GOLDBERG

(1) 270, Tulsa, OK

4—KEVIN NASH

(4) 356, Detroit, MI

5—DIAMOND DALLAS PAGE

(2) 260, Tampa, FL

6—BILLY KIDMAN

(6) 195, Allentown, PA

7—SCOTT STEINER

(-) 251, Detroit, MI

8—BAM BAM BIGELOW

(-) 368, Mt. Laurel, NJ

9—LEX LUGER

(7) 265, Chicago, IL

10—REY MISTERIO JR.

(-) 140, San Diego, CA

11—KONNAN

(8) 237, Mexico City, Mexico

12—THE GIANT

(15) 510, parts unknown

13—SCOTT HALL

(13) 290, Miami, FL

14—CHRIS JERICO

(5) 225, Vancouver, British Columbia

15—PERRY SATURN

(9) 234, Boston, MA

WWF

1—MANKIND

(7) 277, Truth or Consequences, NM

2—KEN SHAMROCK

(2) 235, San Bernardino, CA

3—ROCKY MAIVIA

(1) 272, Miami, FL

4—STEVE AUSTIN

(3) 252, Victoria, TX

5—HUNTER HEARST HELMSLEY

(-) 279, Greenwich, CT

6—KANE

(4) 345, parts unknown

7—JESSE JAMES

(-) 240, Marietta, GA

8—X-PAC

(6) 212, Minneapolis, MN

9—BILLY GUNN

(-) 256 Austin, TX

10—STEVE BLACKMAN

(-) 245, Annville, PA

11—AL SNOW

(13) 232, Lima, OH

12—VAL VENIS

(9) 250, Las Vegas, NV

13—JEFF JARRETT

(8) 230, Nashville, TN

14—GOLDUST

(12) 254, Austin, TX

15—MARK HENRY

(11) 413, Austin, TX

ECW

1—SHANE DOUGLAS

(1) 240, Pittsburgh, PA

2—ROB VAN DAM

(2) 237, Battle Creek, MI

3—TAZ

(3) 248, Red Hook, NY

4—SABU

(4) 220, Bombay

5—LANCE STORM

(5) 234, Calgary, Alberta

6—MASATO TANAKA

(13) 235, Tokyo, Japan

7—TOMMY DREAMER

(6) 245, Yonkers, NY

8—JUSTIN CREDIBLE

(7) 225, Waterbury, CT

9—SPIKE DUDLEY

(10) 155, Philadelphia, PA

10—MIKEY WHIPWRECK

(12) 187, New York, NY

11—SUPER NOVA

(15) 215, Bricktown, NJ

12—JERRY LYNN

(14) 214, Minneapolis, MN

13—MIKE LOZANSKY

(9) 232, Calgary, Alberta

14—SKULL VON CRUSH

(-) 236, parts unknown

15—CHRIS CHETTI

(-) 227, Amityville, NY

INTERNATIONAL

1—KEIJI MUTO

(7) 245, Yamanashi, Japan

2—MITSU HARU MISAWA

(1) 228, Ashikaga, Japan

3—RAYO DE JALISCO JR.

(6) 270, Guadalajara, Mexico

4—JUSHIN LIGER

(5) 206, Hiroshima, Japan

5—SCOTT NORTON

(2) 360, Minneapolis, MN

6—KENTA KOBASHI

(3) 261, Fukuchiyama, Japan

7—PERRO AGUAYO

(9) 220, Zacatecas, Mexico

8—EL HIJO DEL SANTO

(13) 180, Tlancingo, Mexico

9—SHINYA HASHIMOTO

(8) 287, Gifu, Japan

10—KENSUKE SASAKI

(-) 233, Tokyo, Japan

11—AKIRA TAUE

(10) 265, Chichibu, Japan

12—FUERZA GUERRERA

(-) 180, Mexico City, Mexico

13—KOJI KANEMOTO

(-) 205, Osaka, Japan

14—APOLO DANTES

(15) 215, Guadalajara, Mexico

15—HAYABUSA

(-) 175, Osaka, Japan

TOP 15 TAG TEAMS

1—BIG BOSSMAN & KEN SHAMROCK

(-) WWF World tag team champions

2—SABU & ROB VAN DAM

(7) ECW tag team champions

3—BILLY GUNN & JESSE JAMES

(1) No. 1 contenders: WWF World tag title

4—TOSHIKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE

(4) All-Japan International tag team champions

5—CHRIS BENOIT & DEAN MALENKO

(-) No. 1 contenders: WCW World tag title

6—SATOSHI KOJIMA & HIROYOSHI TENZAN

(-) IWGP tag team champions

7—OWEN HART & JEFF JARRETT

(-) No. 2 contenders: WWF World tag title

8—BUH BUH RAY & D-VON DUDLEY

(2) No. 1 contenders: ECW tag title

9—SHIRO KOSHINAKA & GENICHIRO TENRYU

(5) No. 1 contenders: IWGP tag title

10—VAL VENIS & THE GODFATHER

(-) No. 3 contenders: WWF World tag title

11—AXL ROTTEN & MAHONEY

(-) No. 2 contenders: ECW tag title

12—D-LO BROWN & MARK HENRY

(3) No. 4 contenders: WWF World tag title

13—THE HEADBANGERS

(10) No. 5 contenders: WWF World tag title

14—KNUCKLES NELSON & ERICH SBRACCIA

(11) NWA tag team champions

15—BRADSHAW & FAAROOQ

(-) No. 6 contenders: WWF World tag title

These ratings are compiled by the editors with the assistance of promoters, wrestlers, and reporters around the country, and are based on won-lost records for the past month, quality of opposition, and the inherent skill of each wrestler. The number in parentheses indicates a wrestler's position in that category last issue; (-) indicates that the wrestler was not rated in that category last issue ... Championships highlighted in bold on the "Roll Call Of Champions" have changed hands since our previous issue ... The information under the championship listing indicates the date that champion won the title, who the former champion was, and where the match took place.

For period ended January 4, 1999

ROLL CALL OF CHAMPIONS

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CHAMPION: MITSU HARU MISAWA
(October 31, 1998; from Kenta Kobashi; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: TOSHI AKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE
(January 25, 1998; from Johnny Ace & Kenta Kobashi; Yokohama, Japan)

ALL-JAPAN UNITED NATIONAL CHAMPION: MITSU HARU MISAWA
(October 31, 1998; from Kenta Kobashi; Tokyo, Japan)

ALL-PRO WRESTLING UNIVERSAL CHAMPION: MICHAEL MODEST
(October 31, 1998; from Boom Boom Comini; Hayward, CA)

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: THE BAD STREET BOYZ
(October 24, 1998; from Brian Danzig & Daniel Mayes; Elkin, NC)

AMERICAN INDEPENDENT WRESTLING FEDERATION U.S. CHAMPION: STEVE NILES
(August 29, 1998; from Easy Rider; Stuart, VA)

ECW HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: SHANE DOUGLAS
(November 30, 1997; from Bam Bam Bigelow; Monaca, PA)

ECW TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: ROB VAN DAM & SABU
(December 13, 1998; from Buh Buh Ray & D-Von Dudley; Tokyo, Japan)

ECW TELEVISION CHAMPION: ROB VAN DAM
(April 4, 1998; from Bam Bam Bigelow; Buffalo, NY)

GRANDE WRESTLING ALLIANCE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JAMES PROPER
(December 5, 1998; from Bob Steele; Philadelphia, PA)

IWGP HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: KEIJI MUTO
(January 4, 1999; from Scott Norton; Tokyo, Japan)

IWGP INTERNATIONAL TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: SATOSHI KOJIMA & HIROYOSHI TENZAN
(January 4, 1999; from Shiro Koshinaka & Genichiro Tenryu; Tokyo, Japan)

IWGP JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: JUSHIN LIGER
(February 7, 1998; from Shinjiro Otani; Sapporo, Japan)

MID-EASTERN WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MORGUS THE MANIAC
(November 14, 1998; from Danny Rose; Hampstead, MD)

MID-EASTERN WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: JIMMY JANNETTY & RICH MYERS
(November 14, 1998; from The Executioners; Hampstead, MD)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DAN SEVERN
(February 24, 1995; from Chris Candido; Erlanger, KY)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE NATIONAL CHAMPION: DOUG GILBERT
(October 24, 1998; from Stevie Richards; Cherry Hill, NJ)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE NORTH AMERICAN CHAMPION: CHRIS MICHAELS
(December 26, 1998; from Colorado Kid; Nashville, TN)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE NORTH AMERICAN TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: STEVEN DUNN & RENO RIGGINS
(August 29, 1998; from Wolfie D & Flash Flanagan; Nashville, TN)

NATIONAL WRESTLING ALLIANCE TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KNUCKLES NELSON & ERICH SBRACCIA
(October 24, 1998; from The Border Patrol; Cherry Hill, NJ)

NWA NEW ENGLAND JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: LOUIS ORTIZ
(December 26, 1998; from Tre; Somerville, MA)

NWA NEW ENGLAND HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: CURTIS SLAMDAWG
(September 19, 1998; from Barry Windham; Everett, MA)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MITSU HARU MISAWA
(October 31, 1998; from Kenta Kobashi; Tokyo, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION JUNIOR HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: YOSHINARI OGAWA
(July 19, 1998; beat Satoru Asako in tournament final; Niigata, Japan)

PACIFIC WRESTLING FEDERATION TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: TOSHI AKI KAWADA & AKIRA TAUE
(January 25, 1998; from Johnny Ace & Kenta Kobashi; Yokohama, Japan)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING AMERICAS CHAMPION: ACE DARLING
(December 4, 1998; from Reckless Youth; Reading, PA)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: CHRISTIAN CAGE
(October 10, 1998; from Julio Sanchez; Pottstown, PA)

PENNSYLVANIA CHAMPIONSHIP WRESTLING TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: LANCE DIAMOND & RECKLESS YOUTH
(July 24, 1998; from Inferno Kid & Mike Quackenbush; Reading, PA)

POWER PRO WRESTLING YOUNG GUNS CHAMPION: BALDO
(January 2, 1999; from Lance Jade; Memphis, TN)

TENNESSEE MOUNTAIN WRESTLING HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: MONGOLIAN STOMPER
(November 14, 1998; from Jimmy Golden; Knoxville, TN)

WCW CRUISERWEIGHT CHAMPION: BILLY KIDMAN
(November 22, 1998; from Juventud Guerrera; Auburn Hills, MI)

WCW TELEVISION CHAMPION: SCOTT STEINER
(December 28, 1998; from Konnan; Baltimore, MD)

WCW U.S. CHAMPION: BRET HART
(November 30, 1998; from Dallas Page; Chattanooga, TN)

WCW WORLD CHAMPION: HOLLYWOOD HOGAN
(January 4, 1999; from Kevin Nash; Atlanta, GA)

WCW WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: KENNY KAOS & RICK STEINER
(October 25, 1998; Rick Steiner beat The Giant & Scott Steiner; Las Vegas, NV)

WWF EUROPEAN CHAMPION: X-PAC
(October 18, 1998; from D-Lo Brown; Rosemont, IL)

WWF hardcore CHAMPION: JESSE JAMES
(December 15, 1998; from Big Bossman; Spokane, WA)

WWF INTERCONTINENTAL CHAMPION: KEN SHAMROCK
(October 12, 1998; beat X-Pac in tournament final; Uniondale, NY)

WWF LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHT CHAMPION: DUANE GILL
(November 17, 1998; from Christian Cage; Columbus, OH)

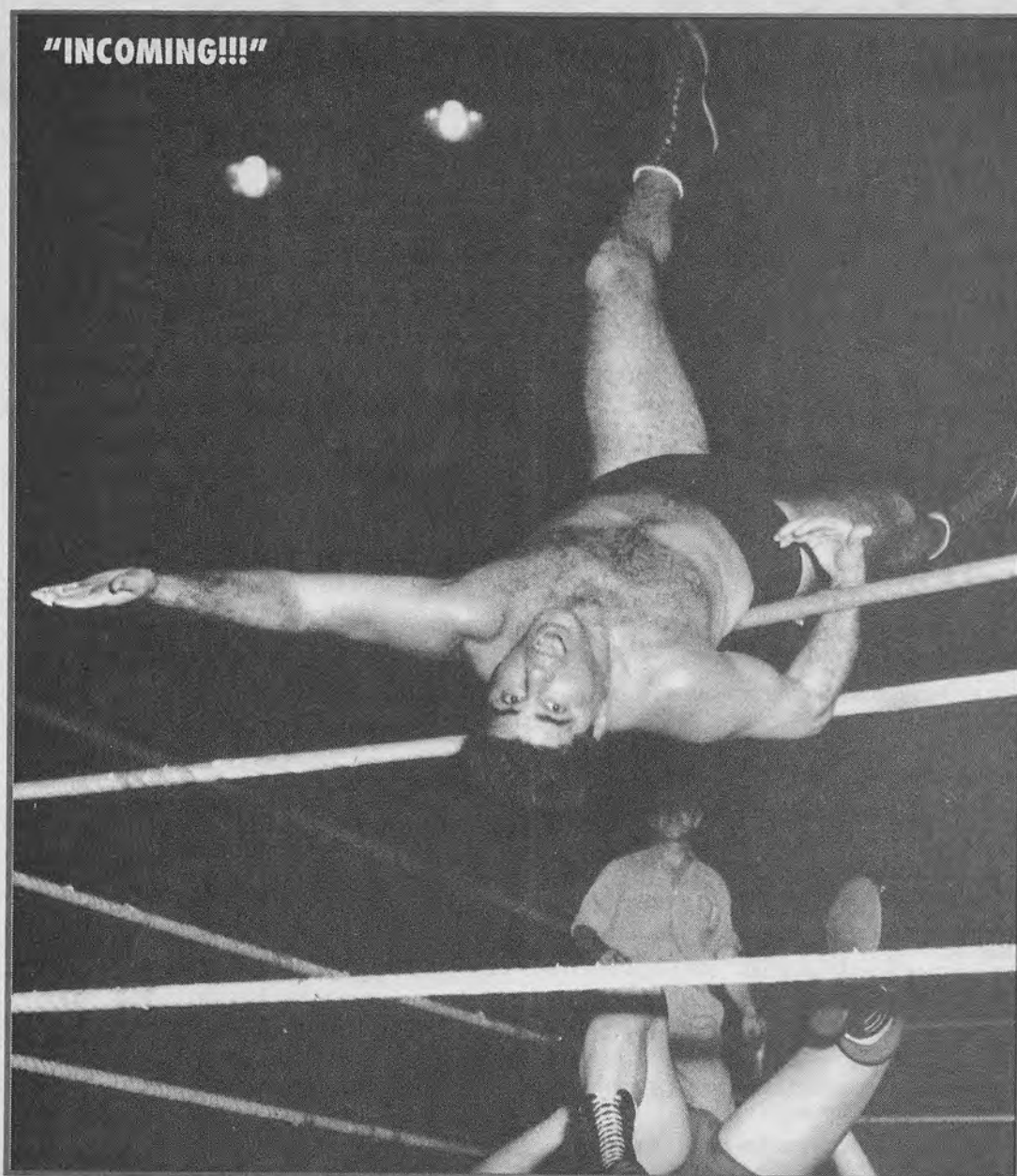
WWF WOMEN'S CHAMPION: SABLE
(November 15, 1998; from Jacquelyn; St. Louis, MO)

WWF WORLD CHAMPION: MANKIND
(December 29, 1998; from Rocky Maivia; Worcester, MA)

WWF WORLD TAG TEAM CHAMPIONS: BIG BOSSMAN & KEN SHAMROCK
(December 14, 1998; from Billy Gunn & Jesse James; Tacoma, WA)

BLAST FROM THE PAST

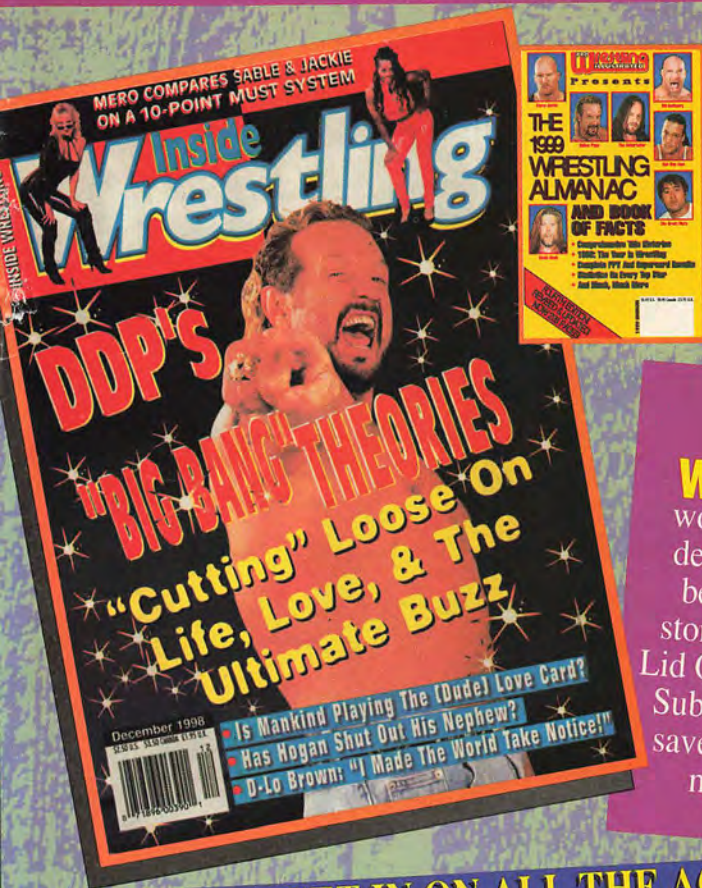
This Month In Wrestling History



BOBBY MANAGOFF vs. WILBUR SNYDER APRIL 1957

Former NWA champion Bobby Managoff looks like he's warning our photographer to get out of the way as he tumbles past challenger Wilbur Snyder and over the top rope in this match from the Civic Auditorium in Hammond, Indiana. For over 30 years, INSIDE WRESTLING's photographers have braved dangerous conditions such as these to bring you the best in wrestling coverage. Fortunately, both Managoff and our photographer survived.

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